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Catholic Missions in the Later Middle Ages

The Achievements and Failures of the Mission Apostolate of the Later Middle Ages in Asia, Europe and Africa

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SUMMA CONTRA GENTILES

by
Rev. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M.

Volume 6, Number 2

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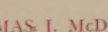

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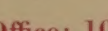

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Introduction

1. In this study we shall endeavor to present a complete survey of Catholic missions during the so-called Later Middle Ages, namely the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries. This is not an easy task, for it will be the first attempt of its kind. General histories and textbooks pay very little attention, if any at all, to this period of missionary history. While much has been written about the earlier period of the Christian era and about the colonial and modern missions beginning with the age of discovery and exploration, the Later Middle Ages have long formed a regrettable gap in the history of missions. In point of fact, it was only during the past half century that various scholars of the European continent (who did not write in the English language) have gradually brought to light the main facts of these three centuries of the Church's missionary work. Making use of the findings of these historians, we shall try to piece the story together in an orderly and summary manner.

2. It is not correct to say, as is done so frequently, that Christendom comprised all of Europe or that Europe was wholly Catholic at the beginning of the 13th century. In the 5th and 6th centuries, it is true, the people of Ireland, Scotland and the Franks on the continent were converted to Christianity; in the 7th and 8th, the English and the Germans became Catholics; and during the four centuries from the 9th to the 12th, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Hungary and most of the Slavic tribes of eastern Europe had joined the Christian nations, although some of the latter, like the Ruthenians, Russians, Bulgarians and Serbs had been drawn into the Greek schism during the 11th century. However, there still remained many parts of Europe which were real mission fields. Besides heretics in the south and schismatics in the east, there were a consider-

able number of pagans and infidels in northern and eastern Europe. To all of these missionaries were sent during the Later Middle Ages.

3. At the beginning of the 13th century, moreover, Europe for the first time began sending messengers of the Gospel also to foreign lands; and the man who inaugurated the first European "foreign" missions was the apostolic St. Francis of Assisi. For several centuries previously missionaries from northern and middle Europe had been working in northern and eastern Europe, while Greek missionaries had preached the Gospel to the Russians and other Slav peoples. Italy, the homeland of St. Francis, which for a long time had taken no part in the Church's apostolate, now furnished most of the "foreign" missionaries of the Later Middle Ages; and many of them were men of such heroic calibre that their fearless and amazing exploits as preachers of the Gospel cannot but excite our admiration in a high degree.

4. As early as 1213, St. Francis himself set out for Morocco for the purpose of converting the Almohade Sultan Maamun, who had been driven out of Spain in the preceding year; but he got only as far as Spain, whence sickness compelled him to return to Italy. However, in 1219, after sending some of his brethren to Morocco, Tunis and Syria, he himself journeyed to the court of the sultan of Egypt. And in the Rule which he wrote for his followers, he placed a special chapter concerning those who wished to go to the Saracens and other infidels.

5. St. Dominic, too, several times wished to preach the Gospel to pagans and infidels. On one occasion he wanted to go to Morocco; on another, he made plans to preach to the pagans in northern Europe (probably the Prussians); and at the end of his life, it seems he desired to work among the pagan Cumans in Russia. But work among the heretics in southern Europe and affairs of the order he had founded kept him at home. Soon after his death (1221), however, the sons of St. Dominic joined the sons of St. Francis, not only among the schismatics and pagans of eastern Europe but also among the pagans, infidels and schismatics of Africa and Asia.

6. And so it came to pass that the Church's missionary work during the Later Middle Ages was carried out almost exclusively by the newly founded mendicant orders, the Order of Friars Minor and the Order of Preachers. Though the former supplied the greater number of missionaries, both orders have a glorious record; and in the pages that follow we have striven to present an impartial account and to give due credit to both.

1.
Organization of the Missions

7. Before we discuss the missionary work of the Later Middle Ages, it will be well to prefix some remarks about the organization of these missions even though this will require that we anticipate something of the history of the missions themselves.

8. As far as the Dominicans were concerned, various provinces of the order supplied missionaries for certain missions. In northern Africa, the friars came from Spain, France and Italy; in Prussia, the Baltic States and Finland, they were Poles, Germans, Englishmen and Swedes; those among the pagan Cumans and the schismatics of neighboring countries were from the Province of Hungary. In addition, there were two missionary provinces, Greece and the Holy Land, both of which were founded in 1228. These two were formed by voluntary recruits from other provinces. The Holy Land Province also sent missionaries into other parts of Asia until the beginnings of the 14th century, when a special "Society of Travelers for Christ" *(Societas Peregrinantium propter Christum)* was organized. The latter eventually comprised all of the Dominican missions in the pagan regions of southern Europe and western Asia.

9. At the head of the Society of Travelers there was a vicar general. The first seems to have been Father Andrew della Terza, who died in 1343 apparently at Orvieto. The best known was Father Franco of Perugia, to whom the Master General Béranger de Landore addressed a letter on October 20, 1312. This letter mentions, as belonging to the Society, the friaries of Pera (foreigners' quarter in Constantinopel and Kaffa on the Crimean Peninsula (where the vicar resided), to which those of Trebizond in Asia Minor and

Negropont in Greece were added later on. After the Black Death the general chapter held at Magdeburg in 1363 joined these friaries to the Province of Greece. In 1375, however, Gregory XI returned them to the Society and added the friary on the Island of Chios.

10. Every province of the order, except Greece and the Holy Land, was permitted to release at first three, and since 1343, four friars for the Society; and the vicar assigned them to one of the bases, where they prepared themselves for their missionary work. Most of these were Italians, though there were also Germans, Poles, Hungarians and Englishmen. The general chapter held in 1333 instructed the vicar to open language schools for the missionaries at the central friaries.

11. Because the conquests of the Ottoman Turks made missionary work impossible in western Asia, the general chapter held at Montpellier in 1456 suppressed the Society. Pius II cancelled this decision in 1464, but the Society could no longer be restored to its former status.

12. In regard to the Franciscans, the first mission territories were soon raised to the rank of provinces. Thus, already under Brother Elias, there existed the Province of Barbary in northern Africa, and also the Province of Syria or the Holy Land. While the former was suppressed as a "province" in 1239; the latter was divided in 1263; and the Province of Greece, including Crete and some other islands in the Aegean and the Adriatic seas, was formed. The Custody of the Holy Land was established in 1377, but at that time it did not supplant the Province of the Holy Land or Syria. In 1384, the latter had twelve friaries; and the Province of Greece had fifteen. Towards the end of the 15th century a separate province was founded on the Island of Crete.

13. Because of a prohibition issued in 1288 by Nicholas IV, the Franciscans could not erect new provinces and hence they organized their mission fields into so-called "vicarates" (the Latin term is *vicaria,* which is best translated as "vicarate" to distinguish it from *vicariatus* or "vicariate"). Although there was one vicarate, that of Sardinia, which was not missionary in character, all the other vicarates of the

order were mission fields. During the 14th century the latter were eight in number, as follows (the statistics are for the year 1384):

(1) The Vicarate of Morocco, the former Province of Barbary, including Algeria and Tunis; five friaries.

(2) The Vicarate of Corsica; eleven friaries.

(3) The Vicarate of Livonia, including Lithuania and Prussia; five friaries.

(4) The Vicarate of Russia, including the Ukraine and eastern Galicia (the country of the Ruthenians) and also Wallachia, Moldavia and Podolia; fifteen friaries.

(5) The Vicarate of Bosnia, including all of the northern Balkan countries; thirty-five friaries.

(6) The Vicarate of North Tatary *(Vicaria Aquilonaris),* in the Mongol khanate of Kipchak or of "the Golden Horde," comprising the southernmost part of Russia; eighteen friaries. This vicarate was subdivided into the two custodies of the Crimea *(Gazaria)* and of Sarai.

(7) The Vicarate of East Tatary *(Vicaria Orientis),* including the khanate of Persia with its dependencies, Asia Minor and Constantinople, and hence subdivided into the three custodies of Tabris, Trebizond and Constantinople; eighteen friaries.

(8) The Vicarate of Cathay, or China, including Sinkiang or Chinese Turkestan in central Asia; nine friaries (in 1368, if not in 1384).

A ninth vicarate, that of the Canary Islands, was established in 1423 by Pope Martin V.

14. At the head of each vicarate there was a vicar who represented the minister general of the order. In 1410 mention is made also of an archvicar who was placed over three vicarates—"archvicarius in vicariis Orientali, Aquilonari et Russiae." The missionaries in these vicarate were recruited from the various provinces of Europe, particularly Italy.

15. When the Vicarate of Cathay came to an end in the latter part of the 14th century, the Vicarate of Russia had extended its sphere of activity toward the east; and at the close of this century it was the most important of the vicarates and had missionaries from all the provinces of the

order. About 1362 this vicarate organized its own "Society of Travelers for Christ," which was similar to that of the Dominicans but independent of it. The Franciscan Society likewise received its own superior, a vicar in addition to the vicar of the Vicarate of Russia. At first the Franciscan Society's mission field was limited to "Russia, Wallachia and Podolia"; but in 1401 its members were also in "Tartary and at the Caspian Sea," that is, in the khanate of Kipchak. According to a report made to Boniface IX (1389-1404), the Franciscan Society had converted thousands on the shores of the Caspian Sea.

16. Not long after its establishment, the Franciscan Society also organized a mission aid society, "the Confraternity of St. Francis," whose members assisted the missionaries working in Russia, Wallachia and Podolia "in all their needs." At the request of Father Mark Sclavus of Candia, special papal approbation was granted to this earliest mission aid society on record by Pope Martin V in 1421. This pope also imparted a plenary indulgence in the hour of death to the members of this confraternity.

17. We are now ready to let the various countries of the missionary world of the Later Middle Ages pass in review; and we shall group them according to the then known continents: Europe, Africa and Asia.

2.
Europe

18. In the southwestern part of Europe there were mission fields in Spain, France, Italy and Corsica; in the northeastern portion, Finland, Lapland, Pomerania, Prussia, Livonia and Lithuania; in eastern Europe, Moravia, Russia proper, the country of the Ruthenians (southwestern Russia), the land of the Cumans (southern Russia), Hungary, Rumania (Wallachia, Moldavia and Podolia); then, the northern Balkan countries of Bosnia, Dalmatia, Albania, Serbia and Bulgaria; and finally Constantinople, Greece and Kipchak (southernmost Russia).

Spain

19. The decline of Moorish power in Spain began in 1212 with the defeat of Maamun (of the Almohade dynasty, 1145-1269) at the battle of Navas de Tolosa, and Maamun's retirement to Morocco. St. Ferdinand, King of Castile (1217-1252) took Cordova in 1236, Murcia in 1243, and Seville in 1248. Valencia surrendered to King James I of Aragon in 1238; and Abu-Said, the last Mohammedan ruler of Valencia, became a Christian. Seven years earlier, on August 29, 1231, the latter had the Franciscans, Blessed John of Perugia and Blessed Peter of Sassoferrato, beheaded because they had dared to preach the Christian Faith in Valencia. To make reparation, Abu-Said (who is called Azotus in the Latin account) gave his palace to the Franciscans, and it was converted into a friary. (Concerning these martyrs see Barth, *The Poverello's Round Table*, p. 51. This work will serve as an available ready reference for more details about some of the prominent missionaries

who will be mentioned by name; and we shall abbreviate it as PRT.)

20. The conquering armies were followed by Dominican and Franciscan missionaries who converted many of the Moslem Moors. An outstanding organizer and promoter of their apostolate was the Dominican St. Raymond of Peñaforte. According to an old life of St. Raymond, 10,000 Mohammedans were converted by the friars of both orders within a few years. Although King James I of Aragon, in 1242, issued orders compelling Jews and Moors to attend the sermons which were given by the bishops and the friars, St. Thomas Aquinas and Roger Bacon warned missionaries against trying to make converts by force. It was at the request of St. Raymond apparently, that St. Thomas wrote a handbook for missionaries, his *Summa contra Gentiles;* and this work was followed by others of an apologetic character. It was due also to the influence of St. Raymond that the Dominicans, with the support of the kings of Castile and Aragon, founded schools for the study of the Arabian and Hebrew languages.

21. Of the southern part of Spain, the Moslem Moors retained control until Granada fell in the same year in which Columbus discovered the New World. In 1397 two Franciscans, Blessed John of Cetina and Blessed Peter of Dueñas, were beheaded at Granada by the Moorish king himself, because they had ventured to preach the Gospel in his domain (PRT, p. 322).

22. St. Vincent Ferrer, the well known Dominican, is said to have converted 7,000 Mohammedans; and he worked also for the conversion of the Jews in Spain, 1409-1410 and 1414.

France

23. For seven years St. Dominic and his companions labored in southern France for the conversion of the Albigensians, who may be styled the "Communists" of the Middle Ages; and they were successful in leading many of the heretics back into the true Fold, especially, it is said, through the recitation of the Rosary.

24. Following the victorious campaign of the crusade which Simon of Montfort led against the Albigensians,

Dominican and Franciscan inquisitors were appointed to supervise the work of converting the heretics. In May, 1242, the heretics murdered the Franciscan inquisitors, Blessed Stephen and Raymond (PRT, p. 325), and the Dominican inquisitors William Arnaud and Bernard de Rochefort as well as their lay-brother companion Garcia d'Aura.

Italy

25. In 1220 St. Dominic and a few of his brethren preached in Lombardy where heresy had assumed alarming proportions. It is claimed that the holy founder, by his sermons and miracles, converted 100,000 unbelievers.

26. The Dominican general inquisitor, St. Peter of Verona, likewise preached against Manichaean errors still prevalent in northern Italy at the time. With his companion, a lay-brother, he was murdered by Manichaeans near Milan on April 6, 1252.

27. By order of Pope Gregory IX, Dominicans began preaching the Gospel in 1233 to the Mohammedan mercenaries who had been introduced into southern Italy by Frederick II in 1221-1223. They were converted gradually, so that by 1313 no trace of Mohammedanism was left.

28. In the 15th century several Popes sent famous Franciscan preachers to combat the Waldensian heresy in Piedmont. Thus Pope Eugene IV sent St. Bernardine of Siena; Pope Pius II sent Venerable Candidus of Vercelli; Pope Sixtus IV sent Blessed Bernardine of Feltre (PRT).

Corsica

29. Pope John XXII, in 1331, deplored the fact that the clergy on the island of Corsica had abandoned the law of celibacy and failed to instruct the half-civilized natives in the Faith. Accordingly, he gave orders to the Franciscan provincials of Tuscany and Genoa to send six experienced priests to the island for the purpose of instructing the people. He mentions that the Dominicans were already on the scene and had a friary at Bonifacio. Wadding explains that the errors of Paul of Samosata and of the Manichaeans had been introduced into the island.

30. In 1369 Urban VI permitted the Franciscans of Cor-

sica to call additional friars to their assistance in their task of combatting heresy. And the Vicarate of Corsica was established before 1373, for in that year Gregory XI allowed the Franciscan vicar on the island to establish four more friaries, because the heretics were retiring into the forests and mountains.

31. By 1390, according to the testimony of Friar Bartholomew of Pisa who wrote from Corsica, the friars, by their preaching and example, had led priests and people back to a Christian life and had completely wiped out all heresies.

Finland

32. Christianity was introduced into Finland in 1156. After 1221, the Dominican Thomas of England was made bishop here. Because of his poverty and the apostasy of some of the Finns, he encountered great difficulties; but with the aid of armed assistance he was able to save the Church in Finland by 1240. New troubles arose, however, and he resigned in 1245.

33. The victory of Christianity and the establishment of the Dominicans in Finland followed the expedition of Birger Jarl in 1249. The Dominican friars exercised a deep influence on the cultural and religious life of Finland at that time. Franciscans came to the country about 1400.

Lapland

34. Toward the end of the 15th century, Franciscans of Norway and Sweden (which had become Catholic countries during the Early Middle Ages) also commenced to do missionary work in Lapland; but these missions were destroyed during the following century by the Protestant Reformation.

Pomerania

35. The pagan region in northern Germany lying between the Vistula and the Oder and called Pomerania was conquered for Christ during the 12th century by St. Otto and his helpers, but it was not completely Catholic until the middle of the 13th century. Norbertines and Cistercians helped to complete the work of St. Otto.

36. Similarly, the Wends, a slavic tribe in northern Germany, were not completely Christianized until the middle of the 13th century, although the Norbertines and Cistercians had begun to work among them already during the previous century.

Prussia

37. At the beginning of the 13th century there were still numerous independent pagan tribes on the southeast coast of the Baltic who had stubbornly refused to accept Christianity. Cistercian missionaries had tried in vain to convert those who were called the Prussians. It was only after the Knights and Crusaders had subjugated them that the missionaries were able to establish the Church among them.

38. Invited by Conrad of Mazovia (Poland), the Teutonic Knights began the difficult undertaking of conquering these pagan tribes in 1228; and to the Dominicans and Franciscans was assigned the double task of enlisting Crusaders to aid the Knights and then of instructing the conquered tribes in the Christian Faith.

39. The holy war of the Teutonic Knights lasted for more than a half century. It was a bitter struggle, and the Knights were not always victorious. Only in 1283 did the last of the tribes submit. Repeatedly the Holy See exhorted the mendicant friars to continue their work as preachers of the Crusade. Thus, on July 15, 1258, Pope Alexander IV reminded both the Dominicans and the Franciscans that they should not omit preaching the Crusade against the Prussians and the Livonians because they were engaged in preaching against the Tatars, or Mongols, who had invaded Europe from the east.

40. Meanwhile, missionary work among those tribes which had been subdued was making considerable progress. The Dominican St. Hyacinth preached in Prussia already in 1226-1227, and again in 1236-1238. To the Franciscans the Teutonic Knights donated a friary at Thorn in 1239 and one at Culm (Kulm) in 1258, which were to serve as bases for their missionary work among the Prussians. Two more were added after the war ended, namely the friary at Neuenberg in 1284 and another at Braunsberg in 1296.

41. As early as 1243, the papal legate, William of Modena, divided Prussia into the four dioceses of Kulm, Pomesanien or Marienwerder, Ermland and Samland. Dominicans were the first bishops of three of these: Heidenreich of Kulm, Warner of Pomesanien, and Thetward of Samland. Afterwards Franciscans were made bishops of two of these dioceses: John of Diest was appointed Bishop of Samland in 1252; Herman of Cologne, of the same diocese in 1275; and Friar Albert, Bishop of Pomesanien in 1261. The latter founded the city of Riesenburg.

42. Nor were martyrs lacking among the missionaries. In the *Catalogus Sanctorum Fratrum Minorum,* written before 1335, we find this entry: "In Prussia, Friar Conrad and Friar Woysclaus were martyred because of their preaching of the Faith."

43. That the missionary work continued for a considerable time after the war was over is indicated by a bull of Clement V, June 19, 1310, which states that the friars of Braunsberg are constantly engaged in propagating the Catholic religion, and commends one friar in particular because he is always at work among the pagans, instructing and baptizing them.

Livonia

44. When the first Franciscans and Dominicans arrived in Livonia (including the two adjoining countries to the south and north, namely Courland and Esthonia), most of the people had aready been won for the Faith by Bishop Albert (1198-1229) with the aid of the Knights, Norbertines and Cistercians, whom he had called to his assistance. In his encyclopedia, *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (about 1240), Bartholomew of England writes that the greater part of the Livonians had already become Christians.

45. Dominicans first came to Revel in Esthonia in 1229, and had a convent there from the year 1246 on. They had a convent at Riga in 1244, and at Dorpat in Livonia in 1300. The Franciscans are mentioned for the first time as being in Riga in 1238. The missionary task of the friars consisted chiefly in converting the people living in the rural sections. In this work they were engaged for a considerable time, as

is evident from statements made at the time of Frederick of Pernstein, Archbishop of Riga (1304-1340), which still refer to the work of the Franciscans among the pagans and the neophytes.

46. Unfortunately the Teutonic Knights continued their fighting for political reasons even after the people were converted; and the missionaries in the Baltic States repeatedly had reason to find fault with the Knights, who even destroyed churches and convents. As late as 1318 the Archbishop of Riga complained about the interference of the Knights.

Lithuania

47. The last of the Baltic countries to accept Christianity was Lithuania. The prospects were very promising in 1250, when King Mindove was baptized, and Franciscan and Dominican missionaries came into the country to instruct the people. It was at this time that St. Hyacinth founded a Dominican convent at Vilna. But in 1262, Mindove apostatized, and his sons and successors remained pagans.

48. The friars, however, did not give up their attempts to win also this land for Christ, especially under King Gedimin (1316-1341). Although this king remained a pagan, he showed himself tolerant, as a rule, toward the Catholic missionaries. In 1323 he even invited the Franciscans and the Dominicans to come into the country; and both orders opened a house at Vilna. On one occasion, however, probably at a time when the Knights invaded the country, Gedimin condemned two Franciscan missionaries to death. These were Friar Ulric of Adlechonvitz and Friar Martin of Ahd. Under Gedimin also, in 1333, fourteen Franciscans died for the Faith in an uprising of the citizens of Vilna. Seven of them were killed by the sword in the city; the others were crucified and then thrown into the nearby Vilija River, but their bodies were recovered and buried in the cemetery within the city. Seven more Franciscan martyrs died at Vilna in 1370, under Kestuit, successor of Gedimin.

49. Jagiello, who succeeded Kestuit after the assassination of the latter in 1382, sought to strengthen his position

by asking for the hand of Hedwig, daughter of King Louis I of Hungary and heir to the Polish crown. Hedwig consented to become his wife, provided he would be baptized and allow the Christian religion to be established in Lithuania. Having received the necessary instructions from the Franciscans, Jagiello, together with his eight brothers, was baptized at Krakow on February 15, 1386, and was henceforth known as Vladislaus. He sent to his country several Franciscans who could speak Lithuanian; and with his bride he returned the next year, accompanied by numerous Polish priests.

50. Vilna was immediately made the seat of a diocese (1386), and the veteran Franciscan missionary, Andrew Vasilo, previously Bishop of Sereth and of Halicz, was appointed first Bishop of Vilna. With the support of Vladislaus, the conversion of Lithuania, now united with Poland under one crown, was accomplished within a short time. One of the outstanding missionaries was the Polish Franciscan, John the Small, who converted more than 20,000 persons, including besides Lithuanians also Ruthenians and Tatars. Nevertheless, missionary work remained to be done as late as 1468, when Paul II permitted the Observant Franciscans to found two friaries in each of the countries of Poland, Lithuania and Russia, because King Casimir IV had informed the pope that there were many unbelievers, heretics and schismatics in Lithuania and among the Ruthenians.

Moravia

51. Unusual success crowned the missionary efforts of St. John Capistran among the Hussites of Moravia in 1451. In a letter addressed to the University of Vienna, St. John himself estimated the number of priests who had abjured the heresy in his presence at more than 4,000. Despite repeated attempts, however, he was not able to enter Bohemia. Rokyzana stubbornly prevented him from coming into the country, and refused even to have a conference with him. According to Father Walz, no less than one hundred Dominicans died at the hands of the Hussites.

Russia

52. By "Russia" is meant here only a part of the later European Russia. The country of the Ruthenians (southwestern Russia), the land of the Cumans (southern Russia) and the Mongol khanate of Kipchak (southernmost Russia) will be mentioned separately. Russia proper had become a Catholic country in the 11th century, and Kiev was made a metropolitan see in 1035; but soon afterwards, the country was dragged into the Greek schism because Greek missionaries had preached the Gospel to the Russians.

53. After founding a Dominican province in Poland in 1221 and working successfully in that country, St. Hyacinth established a convent of his order at Kiev in Russia in 1222. When he left for Prussia in 1226, he placed Friar Godwin in charge at Kiev. However, the Dominicans in this city had to flee from the approaching Mongols in 1233; and the convent was destroyed with the city at least in 1240.

54. As early as 1235-1237 the Dominican Friar Richard and his companions of the Province of Hungary made a journey to so-called Greater Hungary, the region on the banks of the Volga near the Ural Mountains, where pagan Magyars were still living; but they were not able to achieve any missionary success.

55. When the Franciscan Father John of Piano di Carpine was returning from Mongolia, he stopped at Kiev in 1247, in accordance with instructions he had received from the pope, and succeeded in obtaining the consent of some schismatic princes and bishops for union with the Holy See. A bishopric of the Latin rite was erected at Kiev in 1320, and its first bishop was the Dominican Henry de Porwalle.

The Ruthenians

56. The country of the Ruthenians was described by the Polish King Casimir IV as that "part of Russia which was subject to him." It included East Galicia, which was annexed to Poland in 1340 at the time of King Casimir III, and the Ukraine, which came under Polish rule at the time of the union of the crowns of Poland and Lithuania in 1386.

57. Already in the previous century, however, Dominican and Franciscan friars had begun to work among the

Ruthenian schismatics; and the Cistercian Gerhard was made bishop of the Uniate Ruthenians about 1232. The Dominicans had a house at Halicz in eastern Galicia about 1238; and another at Leopolis in 1270. The latter, which was made a convent in 1297, served as a center for missionary work and was ruled by a special vicar until 1378, when it was joined to the Province of Poland. As representative of the Holy See, the Dominican Friar Alexius tried to bring about a union of the schismatics in 1246 at the court of Daniel of Halicz, a vassal of the Tatars. In 1277 the Dominican general chapter gave the Province of Poland permission to erect two houses on the confines of Russia (probably among the Ruthenians).

58. When the Mongols invaded Poland and the country of the Ruthenians in 1260, the Dominican Blessed Dominic Sadoc and forty-eight confreres were murdered by them at Sandomir (Sandomierz); and the Franciscan Father Guardian Bartholomew as well as the Poor Clare Abbess Agnes, together with about eighty friars and nuns, were put to death by the pagan invaders at Zawichost.

59. Eastern Galicia was also the original mission field of the Franciscan Vicarate of Russia, which in 1390 counted fourteen friaries. The members of the latter were quite successful in leading the schismatic Ruthenians into the Catholic Fold. This is evident from the Catholic dioceses of the Latin rite which were established among them during the 14th century.

60. Particularly interesting is the development of the see of Chelm. After having been without a shepherd for a long time, it received a bishop once more in 1359 in the person of the Franciscan Thomas Ninogney (Nimperquey). It was then transferred to Halicz, where the Franciscan Friar Christian was the first incumbent in 1364. At the request of King Louis I, Halicz was made an archdiocese, and two Franciscans served as archbishops there before the seat was transferred to Lember in 1414. The second archbishop of Halicz was the Blessed James of Strepa (1392-1410), whose work among the Ruthenians was particularly successful (PRT, p. 648).

61. Other dioceses erected among the Ruthenians about

the middle of the 14th century were Vladimir (which like Chelm was re-established), Sereth in Bukovina, and Przemisl. Friar Henry of Winsen, a Franciscan, was made bishop of the latter in 1377, and was succeeded by a confrere, Friar Matthew Jamna (1392-1420).

62. It seems that these zealous missionaries would have attained even greater success if they could have permitted the convert Ruthenians to retain the Greek rite, instead of changing to the Latin rite. At any rate, King Casimir IV of Poland, writing to St. John Capistran in 1451, besought that great missionary to extend his ministrations also to the schismatic Ruthenians and assured him that it would be an easy matter to bring them into the Catholic Church if they were allowed to keep the Greek rite, in which they were brought up and to which they were attached. St. John was unable to preach to the Ruthenians because of other demands on his services; and it was not until the Synod of Brest in 1596 that the union of the schismatic Ruthenians as a group was brought about, at which time their rite was approved and a Uniate Greek hierarchy was established among them.

The Cumans

(Southern Russia)

63. The Patzinaks who occupied the southern part of Russia lying between the Dnieper and the Ural were displaced in the middle of the 11th century by the Turkish nomads called the Cumans or Polovzians. For the purpose of defending the Hungarian border against the inroads of the pagan Cumans, as well as converting them to Christianity, King Andrew II invited the Teutonic Knights to eastern Hungary (Siebenbürgen). They made a good beginning; but differences arose between the Knights and the king, and in 1225 the latter banished them from the country.

64. After Blessed Paul had founded a Dominican province in Hungary in 1221, these friars became the successors of the Knights. The Cumans drove out the Dominicans, but they returned. Although two of their number were killed, their missionary efforts were soon crowned with some success. Friar Benedict reported to the master general

that several chiefs had become Christians and several thousand of both sexes were baptized annually. Already in 1228 the Dominican Friar Theodoric was consecrated a bishop and established his residence at Milcov in Wallachia as a center for work among the Cumans in Russia.

65. The Mongol invasions, however, put an end to these missions. Already in 1223 the eastern part of the territory of the Cumans fell into the hands of the Mongols, and the people in this area subsequently became Moslems. The second invasion of the Mongols in 1237 was worse. Not only the western portion of the land of the Cumans, but also Hungary, Poland, Moravia and part of Silesia were literally covered with ruins and corpses after the Mongols had come and gone. About ninety Dominican friars were put to death by the sword or lance or fire. The episcopal residence at Milcov went up in flames. The Cumans of the western part of their territory in Russia settled in Hungary and in Rumania (Moldavia and Wallachia).

Hungary

66. The last remnants of paganism among the Magyars or Hungarians had disappeared already in the 11th century; but in 1239, after the Mongol invasion, the Cuman chief Kuthen and his people were permitted to come into Hungary, provided they would become Christians. Dominican and Franciscan missionaries undertook the difficult work of converting these uncivilized pagans. In 1264 Urban IV deplored the un-Christian excesses of the Cumans in Hungary despite the fact that they had been baptized. The difficulties of the missionaries were rendered all the greater by the scandalous life of King Ladislaus IV of Hungary who lived among the Cumans, and like them, until they murdered him in 1290. Nicholas III once more commissioned the Franciscans to preach to the Cumans in Hungary; and Clement VI renewed this commission in 1348. Incidentally, the latter pope remarked that many of their number had already been won for the Faith. The work among the Cumans continued until they were Christians not only in name but also in fact.

67. In the following century, as the chapter held at Ka-

locsa reported to Pope Eugene IV in 1436, St. James of the March and his companions converted a large number of heretics in Hungary, among the clergy as well as the laity. They were Hussites, Bogomiles, Manichaeans and others, who had poured into Hungary from neighboring countries to such an extent that the very existence of the Church and the State was threatened. The bishops declared that St. James had not only saved the Faith but also kept the country free from the civil strife and cruelties for which the heretics had been responsible in Bohemia.

Rumania

(Wallachia, Moldavia, and Podolia)

68. During the Middle Ages the southern part of the later Rumania was Wallachia, the northern part was Moldavia, and adjoining the latter on the east lay Podolia. As early as 1287 Franciscan missionaries had considerable success at Vicum (probably the same as Vicena on the west coast of the Black Sea), as was reported in a letter which the Father Custos Ladislaus wrote in that year to the minister general. A list of Franciscan friaries for the year 1334 mentions the two friaries of Vicena, near the mouth of the Danube, and of Maurum Castrum, the same as Akkerman, a Venetian colony on the Dniester River. As in the New World the missionaries frequently succeeded the conquistadores, so also in the Later Middle Ages they seem to have followed the Italian merchants in many instances. A letter of May 1323 reported to the Franciscan general chapter that Friar Angelus of Spoleto had been killed by the Bulgarians at Maurum Castrum. The two friaries of Vicena and Maurum Castrum belonged to the Vicarate of North Tatary although they lay outside the Mongol khanate of Kipchak.

69. Several of the friaries of the Vicarate of Russia, which according to Bartholomew of Pisa had fourteen convents, were in the Bukovina, which belonged to the principality of Moldavia; and one of them was at Sereth, where two friars, as the same Bartholomew testifies, were killed by tree-worshippers.

70. From two bulls issued by Pope Urban V in 1370 we learn the following: the schismatic prince Latzko of

Moldavia and his people had been united with the Holy See by Franciscan missionaries. The prince asked that a see be established at Sereth, and that the Franciscan Friar Andrew Vasilo of Krakow be made the first bishop. This request was carried to the pope by the two Franciscan missionaries, Paul of Schweidnitz and Nicholas of Mehlsack. Not only did Urban V accede to this petition, but he also gave to Father Nicholas the permission to take back with him twenty-five new Franciscan missionaries.

71. The superior of the Vicarate of Russia at this time was Friar Nicholas of Crosna; and to him Gregory XI in 1371 gave the authorization for recruiting thirty Franciscans from any province of the order for the work of converting the schismatics. When Blessed Raymond of Capua was master general of the Dominicans (1380-1399), their Society of Travelers likewise had some missionaries in Moldavia and Wallachia.

72. In Wallachia, which was occupied by Hungary in 1233, Dominicans of the Province of Hungary had done some missionary work among pagans and schismatics already in the 13th century. The diocese of Milcov in Wallachia, which had been established before the Mongol invasion for the Cumans in Russia, was restored in 1347.

73. During the latter part of the 14th century it was especially the Franciscan missionary, Anthony of Spalato, who enjoyed great success in the principality of Wallachia. Hence King Louis I of Hungary asked the Holy See to erect another diocese there. In 1371 Gregory XI responded by commissioning the Archbishops of Gran and Kalocsa to make further inquiries and to send a report to him. It was probably due to their recommendations that the diocese of Turnu Severinu was created in Wallachia at the Hungarian border. This diocese is mentioned for the first time in 1390; and its first bishops were Franciscans.

74. In 1439 Eugene IV instructed Bishop Benedict of Turnu Severinu to administer also the diocese of Sereth, where the bishop had died, and to entrust the care of souls in Moldavia to Observant Franciscans from Bosnia. Two bulls of the same pope in 1442 and 1445 inform us that Friar Dionysius of Ilok had been named Commissary for

Scythia, Moldavia and Wallachia, and neighboring regions, and was going there with many Franciscans. He was empowered to found new friaries; and the two new friaries of Targovistea and Kampilung were opened at this time. Two outstanding Franciscan missionaries in Wallachia during the 15th century were St. James of the March and Friar Fabian of Bachia.

75. In 1462 Wallachia came under Turkish rule; and Moldavia had the same fate shortly after. When Prince Stephen tried to regain indepedence for Moldavia in 1474, a Turkish army overran and devastated the country, carrying off 40,000 inhabitants into slavery. The hatred of the invaders was directed with particular fury against the Franciscans, because numerous spies had acquainted them with the activity of the friars as preachers of the crusade against the Moslems and also with the part played by St. John Capistran at the Christian victory of Belgrade. Hence the Franciscans were able to continue their work here and bring in new recruits only with the greatest difficulty. Wallachia and Moldavia remained under the domination of the Turks until 1856.

Bosnia

76. In Bosnia and the other northern Balkan countries the Greek Orthodox Church had become the state religion in the course of the 11th and 12th centuries; and in the 12th century also the Bogomile and Paulician heretics began to propagate their false doctrines, which were partly Manichaean in character, in this territory.

77. Already in the 13th century the Dominican John the German was appointed Bishop of Diacovar or Bosnia; but because of differences with King Andrew II he relinquished the see, and the Dominican Friar Ponsa took his place.

78. In the 14th century, Bosnia and the other northern Balkan countries became a predominantly Franciscan mission field. In fact, from 1300 down to the present day, the Friars Minor have been the principal and in many places the only missionaries of the northern Balkan states. They received this assignment from Pope Nicholas IV, who had been provincial of the "Slavonian" Franciscans before his

elevation to the papacy, and hence knew from personal experience what the situation was in this territory. During the first year of his pontificate, he sent Friars Martin and Cyprian as inquisitors to Bosnia. To the ruler of Bosnia he sent a special letter, asking him to heed the message of the friars and to return to the Catholic Fold.

79. After working in Bosnia for several decades, the Franciscans were driven out and the churches were destroyed. Under the protection of the King of Hungary, they returned and won a large part of the nobility for the Faith and founded numerous friaries. One of the friars, John of Aragon, distinguished himself by his ability to refute the Manichaeans in disputations. Another, Peregrin of Saxony, was made bishop of Bosnia. The Vicarate of Bosnia, which comprised all of the northern Balkan countries and was subdivided into seven custodies, about 1390 had no less than thirty-five friaries, as Bartholomew of Pisa tells us.

80. The missionaries of this vicarate were particularly successful under the superiorship of Venerable Bartholomew of Alverna and of St. James of the March (PRT, p. 728). The former, who was vicar for forty years beginning in 1367, informed Pope Boniface IX at the beginning of the 15th century that the friars in Bosnia had led about 50,000 persons into the Catholic Church. St. James of the March, who was made commissary of Bosnia in 1432, labored untiringly in these countries for twenty-five years as commissary or vicar or inquisitor.

81. Pope Eugene IV in 1444 compared the Vicarate of Bosnia to a protecting wall for the House of God and the true Faith: "se murum facientes pro domo Domini et orthodoxae propagatione fidei."

82. The papal legate Thomas wrote to St. John Capistran in 1451, that as soon as the friars entered these reigons the heretics disappeared like wax before fire, and if a sufficient number of good friars could occupy the principal places the heretics would surely be reduced to a small number. The work of the friars in the western part of the northern Balkan not only overcame the heresy of the Bogomiles but also stopped the advance of the Greek schism. When the Turks

conquered the Balkan countries, the remaining Bogomiles became Mohammedans, while the chicanery of the schismatic Greeks, who used the Moslem rulers to gain their end, widened the rift between the schismatics and the Catholics of the Latin rite.

83. During the first decades of the 15th century the Turks made repeated attacks on Bosnia, so that by 1438 sixteen of the Vicarate's friaries had already been destroyed. Bosnia became a Turkish province in 1463; and the four hundred years of Turkish domination which followed were an uninterrupted martyrdom for the Franciscan shepherds and their flock, even though there was no official persecution.

84. Mohammed II in 1463 even went so far as to promise the Franciscans of Bosnia safety and freedom of religion. Seeing that the Catholics were abandoning the country in great numbers and leaving large sections uninhabited, Mohammed called the Franciscan Custos Father Angelus Zviezdovic and allowed him to plead the case of the Catholics. The friar did so well, that Mohammed issued the following decree of toleration: "Since I entertain a high regard for the Bosnian friars who have turned to me for protection, I command that no one shall molest them or their churches, so that they may remain in my domain without fear or anxiety, and those who have fled may return. They shall dwell near their churches securely and undisturbed, and none of my officials or subjects shall disturb them in any way whatever. They shall enjoy full freedom for themselves and their churches."

85. Of course, this decree was not always observed by the Moslem Turks who occupied the land. Nevertheless, it is true that the modern persecution of the Church in Yugoslavia by Tito and his communists has been far worse than was that of the medieval Turks.

Dalmatia

86. While Dalmatia is not counted among the mission fields of the northern Balkan, it required special assistance and served as a base for missionary work. To the Roman province of the Dominicans, in 1236, the pope assigned the task of aiding the Archbishop of Antivari or Bar in Dal-

matia. And during the 13th and 14th centuries several of the archbishops of Bar belonged to the Franciscan and Dominican orders. The Franciscan, Father John of Piano di Carpine, was made Archbishop of Bar after returning from his journey across Asia to the court of the Great Khan of the Mongols. The Dominican, William Ada, was archbishop here 1412-1422. As far as the Franciscans were concerned, Dalmatia belonged in the beginning to the province of Greece. In 1438, Pope Eugene IV gave special privileges to the Dalmatian province of the Dominicans for its missionaries in Albania and neighboring countries.

Albania

87. In 1250 the Dominican province of Hungary began to work for the return of the Albanian schismatics; and two convents were opened in the country, one in 1258 and one in 1278. Franciscans entered Albania about 1240; and afterwards their friaries here belonged to the Vicarate of Bosnia. One of the Dominicans, Friar Nicholas, was made Bishop of Valona in 1303; and in the middle of the 15th century, the Franciscan, Eugene Somma was praised in a special manner for his tireless work in this country. At this time, there were in northern Albania, besides the Franciscans, also Dominicans and Benedictines. The Turks gained control of Albania in 1479; and the friars retired into the mountains, whence they ministered to the Catholics.

Serbia

88. King Stephen IV of Serbia (Urosh Milutin), 1281-1321, was the son of Helena, the daughter of the Latin Emperor Baldwin II. To the queen-mother Pope Nicholas IV wrote a letter in 1288, commending the Franciscan friars. Although Urosh remained a schismatic, he showed himself tolerant to all, Greeks, Bogomiles and Latin Catholics alike. In 1308, Friar Gregory Cattaro, a Franciscan, and Friar Henry de Arimino, a Dominican, even resided at his court, trying to win over the schismatics.

89. In 1354 the pope sent a new group of Franciscans to Serbia under the leadership of Friar Bartholomew, Bishop of Tragori in Dalmatia.

90. The heroic exploits of Hunyadi and Skanderbeg, and the glorious victory at Belgrade on July 22, 1456 (to which St. John Capistran contributed so much) held off the Turks for a while at least. But Serbia became a Turkish province in 1459.

Bulgaria

91. By order of the Holy See, the Dominican provincial of Hungary in 1232 attempted to bring about the union of the Bulgarian schismatics. A similar attempt was made by the Dominican bishop John the German in 1237.

92. In 1291 Franciscan friars carried letters from Pope Nicholas IV to the schismatic archbishop of Bulgaria. However, their missionary work in this country began only in 1365, after the victory of King Louis I of Hungary enabled them to enter the principality of Vidin. According to a statement of the minister general Mark of Viterbo, they baptized 200,000 persons in fifty days; and the king had the names of the baptized written down in special registers. Five of the missionaries won the martyr's crown near Vidin about 1369.

93. The victory of the Turks at Nicopolis in 1396 put an end to this promising mission; and the friars were able to return and resume their work in Bulgaria only after an interval of two hundred years. At the time that the Turks got the upperhand, there were five Franciscan friaries in Bulgaria, according to Bartholomew of Pisa.

Constantinople

94. After the Latin Empire of the East had been founded by French and Venetian crusaders of the fourth Crusade in 1204, it was not difficult for the Franciscans as well as the Dominicans to open a friary in Constantinople at an early date.

95. Five Franciscan friars in 1232 persuaded the Orthodox Greek Patriarch of Constantinople to begin "negotiations" with the Holy See for reunion. Two Franciscans and two Dominicans, one of the latter being Peter of Sezana, were sent by the Pope in the following year; but their efforts as "apocrisarii" were not successful. But it was probably

at this time that friaries of the two mendicant orders were founded in Constantinople. The Latin Empire of the East came to an end in 1261.

96. In 1296, when Genoese colonists had three churches in Pera, that of St. Paul was probably in the care of the Dominicans. To work for the union of the Greek schismatics, the Holy See sent out Dominican friars in 1234, 1256, 1267-1268, and 1277.

97. The Franciscan friary at Constantinople remained there for almost a half century after the restoration of the Byzantine Empire in 1261. The Franciscans who were sent by the popes to Constantinople for the purpose of bringing back the Greek schismatics resided in their own friary at Constantinople. When they were driven out in 1307, they retired to Pera.

98. Till the end of the Byzantine Empire, Franciscans were sent at different times to its emperors and patriarchs in order to work for the return of the schismatics. After Innocent IV had sent a Franciscan representative to Constantinople in 1247, and the emperor had asked that the minister general himself, Blessed John of Parma (PRT, p. 169), be sent, the latter remained in the East for two years. He enjoyed great respect, and was called an "Angel of Peace." At the request of Emperor Michael Palaeologus, Urban IV sent four Franciscans; and these, with others who followed them, succeeded at least in causing the emperor to inform the Holy See that he was favorable toward reunion. Among the four Franciscans who were then sent to Constantinople was Jerome of Ascoli, the later Pope Nicholas IV, who handled affairs so well that at the Council of Lyons in 1274 the union was actually carried out (for which a good share of the credit belongs also to St. Bonaventure). After a few years, unfortunately, the union was again broken.

99. During the 14th century new attempts were made. Thus, the Franciscan William Emergavi, Bishop of Candia or Crete, was sent to Constantinople in 1350 by Clement VI. When Emperor John V Palaeologus finally made his profession of faith in Rome on October 18, 1369, his interpreter was the Franciscan Anthony of Athens, who was made Arch-

bishop of Athens the following year. To strengthen and extend the union, Gregory XI sent Friar Bartholomew Caracio to Constantinople in 1374; and for the same purpose Eugene IV in 1435 sent the theologian, Friar Bartholomew of Giano. These efforts were crowned with temporary success once more at the Council of Florence in 1439, on which occasion the minister general William of Casale, St. Bernardine of Siena and Blessed Albert of Sarteano were deserving of special credit (PRT).

100. Further efforts to bring about a reunion of the Greek schismatics were rendered impossible after the Turks took the city of Constantinople in 1453. In a bull of October 8 of that year, Nicholas V says that the Franciscan friary was looted, and the superior, Friar Jerome of Milan, was killed, while seventeen others were carried off into slavery.

101. In 1497, the Florentine pilgrim Buonsignore once more found Observant Franciscans in Constantinople. They managed to remain there probably till 1584, when the benefactress Lady Clara of Draperis gave to the Father Guardian Pual Olivoli the place in Pera, where the church and friary of Santa Maria in Draperis still stand today. Because of the strong aversion of the Orthodox Greeks towards the Latin Catholics, the work of the friars was henceforth limited to the care of Latin Catholics.

Greece

102. The Dominican missionary province of Greece was founded at least in 1228, and its members devoted themselves principally to the spiritual care of Latin Catholics in that country. In 1277 the province had seven convents, among them Glarenza in northwestern Morea (French colony), Modon in southwestern Morea, Thebes (French), Negropont or Euboea (Lombards), and Candia on the Island of Crete (Lombards). Another house was opened at Canea, Crete, in 1306. These houses sometimes moved with the French and Italian settlers to other places.

103. Before 1308, eight Dominicans of this province were made bishops, one of them being William de Moerbeke, who resided at Corinth 1280-1281. Another member of this

province, Bonacursius by name (ca. 1230-1280), wrote in Greek a work entitled *Treasury of the Truth in Faith*, which another Dominican, Andrew Dato, sent with a Latin translation to John XXII from the library of the convent at Negropont. Because it was so far away from the other provinces of the order, the province of Greece began to decline; and as a result, from 1344 to 1622, the provincial was not elected but appointed by the master general.

104. Franciscan friaries were likewise established in Greece during the 13th century, namely at Athens, Corinth and Thebes. Additional friaries were founded in the 14th century. The Franciscan province of Greece was organized in 1263, and included Crete and some other islands. Its total number of friaries in 1282 was nine; in 1340, twelve; in 1384, fifteen; and in 1390, eighteen.

105. In Greece proper, the Franciscans were able to work also for the conversion of the schismatics, inasmuch as several western principalities which were founded there together with the Latin Empire of the East continued to exist, even after the latter came to an end, down to the coming of the Turks in the middle of the 15th century. As Bishop Jerome of Kaffa reported, the rulers in these western principalities were indeed western princes but the people were schismatics. An outstanding missionary among these Greek schismatics was Friar John of Ripatransone.

The Khanate of Kipchak

(Southernmost Russia)

106. Besides the several khanates or kingdoms which the Mongols or Tatars established in Asia during the 13th century, they founded one about 1222 in Europe, namely, in the southernmost part of Russia. It comprised the territory lying between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea and on the north side of these seas between Hungary and the Ural River. Its name was the Khanate of Kipchak, or of the Golden Horde (the word "horde" meaning camp), or of the North (because it was situated north of the Khanate of Persia).

107. In this region the Franciscan and Dominican missionaries of the Later Middle Ages had more success than in

any other part of the vast Mongol Empire. It was a predominantly Franciscan mission field, although there were also two Dominican houses which served as centers of missionary work. The Dominicans belonged to the Society of Travelers for the Lord. The Franciscan missions of Kipchak, at least by the beginning of the 14th century, were organized into a so-called "vicarate,"—the *Vicaria Aquilonaris,* the Vicarate of the North; and this vicarate was divided into the two custodies of Crimea and Sarai. At the time, it had seventeen friaries, not counting the "loca mobilia" or movable friaries. By the latter were meant the tents, with books and utensils, which the missionaries moved from place to place on wagons. For, when the Mongols moved their herds about in the steppes of Kipchak, the friars accompanied them, and everywhere preached to them and administered the Sacraments to their neophytes. These movable friaries gathered a spiritual harvest which was even greater than that of the permanent convents.

108. The Custody of Crimea is mentioned for the first time in 1287 by Father Custos Ladislaus in a letter which he wrote to the minister general. At this time it had seven friaries, three of them at least on the Crimean Peninsula, and most of them in places where Italian colonies had been founded. The friars of the custody devoted themselves principally to work among Catholics of the Latin rite and among the numerous Armenians who were in these parts.

109. In the Custody of Sarai the work of the missionaries was mainly among the Mongols. Already in 1253, Father William Rubruk, while on his way to the court of the Great Khan in the Far East, preached at the camp of Batu on the east side of the Volga River, although his words did not make much of an impression on the pagan Mongols at this time. Batu's third successor, Berekeh-khan (1256-1266), introduced Mohammedanism into Kipchak; but his immediate followers in the chieftaincy remained pagans and were not opposed to the activity of the Franciscan missionaries who came into the country. The work of the latter was greatly helped along by the splendid reception which was accorded to the Mongol envoys from Kipchak at the II Council of Lyons in 1274. When these envoys returned home, they

were full of praise for the Catholic Church. A large number of Franciscans now went to Kipchak; and, as the chronicler Elemosina writes, from that time on the Church made great progress in "northern Tatary," by which is meant the Khanate of Kipchak.

110. Already in 1278, Nicholas III says he has learned from the provincial of Hungary that the friars who were working among the Mongols had converted a large number of them. One of those baptized was Queen Jailak (or Elegage), who showed her gratitude by building a friary in 1286 at Bakhchisarai on the Crimean Peninsula. During the first half of the 14th century, other members of the ruling family were likewise won for the Faith by the Franciscan missionaries, among them being Toktaku-khan himself (1291-1313).

111. The latter's successor, Usbek-khan (1313-1342) was a Mohammedan, but did not have any of the usual fanaticism of the Moslems. Although at first he was not so friendly toward the Christians, the influence which his wife, Taydola, who was a daughter of the Greek Emperor, and his first-born son Isanibeg exercised upon him rendered him more and more favorable to the missionaries and their flock. He issued a special letter for the protection of the Franciscans in 1314; and later on he granted full freedom to Catholics to profess their Faith and to build churches, as we learn from a letter of thanks which the pope sent to him in 1340. Much credit also goes to the Franciscan Friar Elias who carried out the role of adviser and confidante of Isanibeg with such success that Benedict XII in 1338 praised the friar's prudent zeal. In the same year this pope also expressed his thanks to Usbek for a place he had donated to the Franciscans in the newly founded city of Acsarai, north of Sarai.

112. Thus the rule of Usbek, although he remained a Mohammedan, became the golden age of the Kipchak missions. In 1320 the Hungarian Father Johanca wrote that the Christians had increased in number to such an extent that in some places they constituted one half of the population. Another missionary reported in 1323 that a hundred princes and nobles together with their families had been baptized within a few years. It was during the reign of

Usbek, also, that four Franciscans, Father Johanca and two other Hungarian friars and Friar William from England, labored with great success for six years among the Bashkirs near the Ural River in the eastern part of Kipchak; and if the Mohammedans had not thrown them into prison and tortured them, they would have extended their apostolic labors to Siberia. They had received an invitation from that region, asking them to preach the Gospel there.

113. So numerous were the converts among infidels as well as schismatics, that Pope John XXII (1316-1334) erected several dioceses in Kipchak; and in the course of the 14th century the total number of dioceses created in this khanate was no less than twelve: one archbishopric and five bishoprics in Crimea, and the same number in the rest of Kipchak.

114. Kaffa, the modern Feodosia, capital of the Crimean Peninsula, which was made a diocese in 1317, was the first to be established and lasted longer than any of the others. As early as 1267 the Genoese had begun a colony here, and a Franciscan friary was opened shortly afterwards. By the beginning of the 14th century there was also a Dominican convent with six friars. The first bishop was Friar Jerome, a Catalonian. A bull of John XXII, issued in 1318, declares that the schismatic archbishop and clergy of the Armenians at Kaffa had been united with the Holy See by Bishop Jerome. The Uniate Armenians in Kaffa still had their own bishop during the following century, as is mentioned in a document of Pope Eugene IV; and hence there were two Catholic bishops in this city, one of the Latin rite and one of the Armenian rite. Bishop Jerome was still in Kaffa in 1321 (he had some trouble with the Genoese at the time); but the following year we find him in Avignon. His successor was Bishop Matthew, a Dominican. A Carmelite, Francis de Groppo, who was made Bishop of Kaffa in 1382, was driven out of his diocese by schismatics. Kaffa was a suffragan see of the archbishopric of Khan-baliq in China founded in 1307. The diocese of Kaffa came to an end in 1475, when the Ottoman Turks took the city and either killed the Christians or carried them off into slavery.

115. The Archdiocese of Kerch in Crimea was erected in 1333, after Franciscan and Dominican missionaries had

converted a large number of schismatics and infidels in that city. Subsequently four more dioceses were established in Crimea, first those of Balaklava and Kherson, and then, toward the end of the 14th century, those of Solkat and Sudak (Soldaia). Franciscans were in the latter city as early as 1280, when Marco Polo gave his house at Sudak to the friars. The Genoese established themselves in the same city in 1365; and the work of the missionaries in the dioceses of Solkat and Sudak was mainly among Italian settlers.

116. In the Kipchak Khanate, outside Crimea, the two earliest dioceses, both of them suffragan sees of the archbishopric of Khan-baliq in China, were those of Sarai and of Tana. Sarai, the capital of the khanate, was situated on the Aktuba River, close and parallel to the Volga, not far from the mouth of the latter on the north side of the Caspian Sea. The Genoese merchants opened a factory here in 1316, and the Venetians did the same in 1332. There was a Franciscan friary in the city already in 1287. Sarai is mentioned as a diocese for the first time in 1321. The Franciscan Friar Stephen was Bishop of Sarai in that year, and was robbed of all his goods by the Uniate Armenians who were in league with the Moslems and once more separated from Rome. Pope John XXII sent a special message to the bishop to express his sympathy and to console him in his troubles. The diocese as well as the friary of Sarai came to an end in 1394, when the city was demolished by the hordes of Tamerlane.

117. The diocese of Tana, later called Azov, at first a suffragan see of Khan-baliq, was later on made subject directly to the Holy See. The city of Tana was situated on the Don River near the mouth of this river in the upper extremity of the Sea of Azov. Besides the Franciscan friary, there was at Tana also a Dominican house with three friars at the beginning of the 14th century. The city was completely destroyed by Tamerlane in 1394.

118. After Sarai and Tana, the archdiocese of Matrega was erected on the east side of the Black Sea south of the Kuban River. It had a suffragan see called "Lucucensis" or "Syben." Another diocese was that of Majeria, which lay between Tana and Matrega.

119. The last of the Kipchak dioceses was erected in the latter part of the 14th century. It was that of Kumuk or of the Caspian Mountains, on the west side of the northern part of the Caspian Sea. Pope Boniface IX, in 1392, speaks of more than 10,000 in this region who had been brought into the bosom of the Church by the Franciscan missionaries; and he mentions, as belonging to the missions of the Caspian Mountains, the cities of Chomek, Thuma, Tarchu, Dergweli, and Michaha. Unfortunately, the diocese of Kumuk did not last long. In 1398 and in 1401, Boniface IX says that Tamerlane's army had burned the cities and churches of the diocese or leveled them to the ground; the invaders had killed some of the Christians and enslaved others; they had impoverished the rich and powerful; and they had thoroughly devastated the entire region. The Pope appealed to the faithful for assistance, and gave his approval to the plan of the Franciscan Friar Anthony Solpan, a native of that territory who was visitor of the Franciscan missions in Russia, according to which a fleet would be fitted out on the Caspian Sea and defend the country against the Turks. Whether this was done, we do not know. The fact is that the diocese of Kumuk lasted for a while longer. Martin V in 1421 named the Franciscan Ambrose Scipionis Bishop of Kumuk and expressed his solicitude for the Christians of that region because they had to suffer so much at the hands of infidels, heretics and schismatics. To all who lived there or would go there he granted a plenary indulgence in the hour of death. Eugene IV in 1433 gave Bishop Cornelius of Kumuk permission to take with him to his diocese twenty Franciscan missionaries, since many of the people were falling into errors because of the lack of priests among them. Whether Bishop Cornelius reached his destination, and whether he had any successors, we do not know. No other reference to the diocese of Kumuk has thus far been found in papal documents.

120. Even during the golden age of the Kipchak missions, persecutions and martyrdoms were not lacking. These were due to measures taken by subordinate Moslem officials without the knowledge of the khan, or to the fanaticism of Moslem mobs. As more and more Moslems came into the

Crimean Peninsula, for instance, the missionaries had to suffer much at their hands. John XXII states in 1323 that the Christians were driven out of the Crimean city of Sudak at this time, and their churches were converted into mosques. Paul of Venice reports about 1340 that Father Peter the Small, Guardian of the friary at Kaffa, was killed by the Mohammedans at Solkat.

121. The success which Father Johanca and his three companions had among the Bashkirs near the Ural River so enraged the Mohammedans that they loaded the missionaries with heavy chains, cast them into prison, and starved and tortured them, until non-Moslem Tatars liberated the friars. So weakened were they by the ill treatment they had received, that they were unable to accept the invitation they had received from Siberia to preach the Gospel there. The Hungarian Friar Dominic was skinned alive by Moslems in Kipchak about 1333. Friar Stephen of Gross Wardein won the crown of martyrdom at Sarai on Easter Day, April 22, 1334. Yielding to temptation, this friar had left his convent and become a Mohammedan. But the grace of God brought him to his senses almost at once. The third day after his apostasy he made his confession to his Father Guardian, and then went to the mosque and publicly professed his faith as a Christian. The infuriated Moslems inflicted indescribable tortures on him for a long time and finally killed him with swords, hatchets and stones.

122. Several factors contributed to the decline of the Kipchak missions. Soon after the death of Usbek-khan, his son Isanibeg, who had been of such great help to the missionaries, was murdered by his brother Janibeg. A letter which Clement VI sent in 1343 to Janibeg-khan (1342-1357), seems to have been the last one which the popes sent to the rulers of Kipchak. After Janibeg died, the khanate was weakened more and more by strife in the ruling family.

123. The need of more missionaries which was felt already in 1323, became all the greater when the Black Death of 1348 carried away two-thirds of the friars in Europe; and for several decades it was impossible to send new recruits to the missions. In 1369 Urban V deplored the fact that of the older missionaries who had converted a large number

of infidels in Kipchak only a few remained.

124. During the latter part of the 14th century, however, new missionaries came to Kipchak; and the missions flourished once more, especially in the region of the Caspian Mountains. Some of these belonged to the Franciscan Society of Travelers for the Lord. In 1371 Gregory XI granted permission to Father Francis of Puy, superior of the Vicarate of Kipchak, to take twelve friars from any of the provinces of the order to his mission field; and to Father Nicholas of Crosna, the superior of the Vicarate of Russia, he gave the same permission for thirty missionaries. And in 1392, Boniface IX gave this permission for twenty-four missionary friars to Father Roger of England and Father Ambrose of Siena, all of whom were to go to Kipchak, where the need of priests was very great, especially in the Caspian Mountains.

125. Then occurred the greatest misfortune which had yet befallen the missions of Kipchak—the ruthless conquests of Tamerlane. Gradually the Custody of Sarai, which had ten friaries in the interior of the country, disappeared. Only the Custody of Crimea remained, for which reason the Vicarate of Kipchak is sometimes called the Vicarate of Crimea during the 15th century. In 1475 the Ottoman Turks took the city of Kaffa, and thus the Crimea friaries and missions were likewise swept away.

3.
Africa

126. During the Later Middle Ages, missionary work was carried on in the Saracen countries of northern Africa bordering on the Mediterranean. Beginning in the west, these were Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Libya, and Egypt. Attempts were made to reach Ethiopia or Abyssinia in the east. The Canary Islands off the west coast were Christianized; and missions were begun in the other groups of islands as well as the mainland on the west side of Africa to which Portugal had extended its rule.

Morocco

127. St. Francis himself sent the first missionaries to Morocco in 1219, and these became the protomartyrs of his order. At the capital city, Morocco, Sultan Miramolin himself killed them with the sword on January 16, 1220. They were Saints Berard, Peter, Accursius, Adjutus, and Otho (PRT, 31).

128. Honorius II sent another group of Franciscans and Dominicans to Morocco in 1225; and one of the Dominicans, Dominic by name, was consecrated a bishop. The following year the same pope instructed Archbishop Rodrigo of Toledo to send approved missionaries from both orders to Morocco and gave him the faculty of consecrating two of them bishops. Thus the Franciscan Friar Agnellus was made Bishop of Fez; and another Franciscan missionary of Morocco was consecrated a bishop in 1307. There were additional Franciscan bishops in Morocco from 1382 to 1485.

129. Another group of Franciscan martyrs were beheaded at Ceuta on October 10, 1227. They were Saints Daniel, Angelus, Samuel, Donulus, Leo, Hugolinus, and Nicholas.

And in 1232 five more Franciscans and a large number of Christians of both sexes won the martyr's crown in St. Mary's Church in the city of Morocco.

130. That there was a church in Morocco at this time was due to an agreement made in 1229 by the Almohade Sultan Maamun with St. Ferdinand of Castile (1217-1252) (PRT, 327) after the latter had defeated him in Spain and forced him to retire to Morocco. Maamun had promised to permit the free exercise of the Christian religion by Castilian soldiers, the building of a church in Morocco, and the Baptism of Moslems who wished to become Christians. The martyrs of 1232 probably lost their lives at the hands of a fanatic mob which did not approve of the sultan's tolerance of the Christian religion.

131. As early as 1235, the Franciscan Province of Barbary was established for northern Africa; but it was suppressed soon afterwards, probably at the general chapter of 1239. In the following century, however, the Vicarate of Morocco took its place. After the Portuguese had taken possession of Ceuta in 1415, and of Arcila and Tangier in 1471, Franciscan friaries were opened in these cities, and also a Dominican convent at Ceuta. The latter city and Tangier were made bishoprics.

132. In the Moslem part of Morocco the work of the missionaries was restricted for the most part to the spiritual care of Christian merchants, prisoners and slaves. Only secretly or indirectly could they do missionary work among the Moslems.

Algeria

133. Three times the famous promoter of missions among the Mohammedans, Blessed Raymond Lull (PRT, p. 409) personally tried to preach the Christian Faith in northern Africa, once at Tunis in 1291, and twice at Bougie in eastern Algeria. In 1306, he was banished as soon as he landed at Bougie. The second time, in 1314, he managed to work in secret for a while. Then he was recognized, dragged before a court, and badly maltreated by a mob. He was half dead when he was taken away by a Genoese ship; and he died a martyr as he neared his homeland, Mallorca. During

the rest of the Middle Ages Franciscan missionaries were able to visit various places in Algeria only from time to time.

134. It will not be out of place to make a brief digression at this point for the purpose of calling attention to the important place that Blessed Raymond Lull occupies in mission history. Born in 1234 or 1235, he spent some years at the court of Aragon, a man of the world and by no means a model of virtue. But he learned to spurn the vanity of the world; and in the Church of St. Francis at Palma in his native island country of Mallorca, he was received into the Third Order Secular of St. Francis. Having renounced all worldly honors and possessions, he became animated with one passion, that of saving souls and extending the kingdom of Christ, particularly in Moslem lands. He himself learned the Arabian language at Paris; and he founded a mission college in his native land, where Franciscan missionaries could learn various languages, especially the Arabian, the better to evangelize the infidels. Thus he became the founder of the first mission house and the forerunner of modern mission methods. Raymond himself retired for a while into solitude on Randa Mountain, and earnestly begged God for the wisdom necessary to pursue the work he had commenced. He came forth from his retreat a changed man, a universal genius: artist, poet, philosopher, theologian. For some forty years he journeyed untiringly from place to place, pleading the cause of Christ, in particular, of mission colleges and seminaries. Among other places he visited Rome, Pisa, Avignon, Paris and Vienne. He laid his petitions and plans before Pope Honorius IV and Clement V and the Council of Vienne. By his "Petition for the Conversion of the Infidels" (1294) he was the first to give practical suggestions for a department of mission propaganda. The petition asked the pope and the cardinals to establish mission colleges, where priests might be trained to disseminate the Catholic religion in heathen and infidel lands. What he preached, he sought to practice himself; and in the end he won the martyr's crown. His writings were printed at Mainz in 1740 and comprise ten large volumes. Bishop Turner, in his *History of Philosophy,* styles Blessed Raymond "in some respects one of the most remarkable figures in the his-

tory of medieval philosophy . . . His whole life was dominated by the idea of converting the Moorish world to Christianity." Prominent though he was as a philosopher and theologian, some of his works seem to border on heterodoxy. Were it not for this circumstance, though no one accuses him of formal heresy, he would probably be ranked now among the canonized saints of the Church.

Tunis

135. St. Francis himself sent one of his disciples called Giles to Tunis; and another whose name was Brother Electus died a martyr's death in Tunis about 1220. By 1230 some Dominicans had also come to this territory.

136. In 1246 Innocent IV sent a letter to the ruler of Tunis, recommending to him the Franciscan friars who were sent to that country by the Bishop of Morocco for the purpose of serving the Christians residing there.

137. The well-known Dominican, Andrew of Longjumeau, preached in Tunis about the middle of the 13th century, after he had returned from his journey to the court of the Great Kahn in Mongolia.

138. El Mustanssir, the ruler of Tunis, made a treaty in 1270 with King Philip of France, Charles of Sicily and Theobald of Navarre. Although the original of this treaty says nothing about missionary work among the Moslems, chroniclers of the 13th and 14th centuries tell us that it also permitted the free exercise of the Christian religion. The fact is that a Franciscan friary was opened at Tunis after 1270. A list of friaries for the year 1340 mentions it as belonging to the Province of Aragon. Subsequently the friars seem to have left, because from 1392 to 1427 a Benedictine, Placidus by name, was caring for the Church of St. Francis in Tunis. Afterwards Franciscans were in Tunis only temporarily.

Libya

139. Libya, that part of northern Africa, which lies to the west of Egypt, was the scene of the missionary labors of the Franciscan Blessed Conrad of Ascoli (1234-1289), townsman and intimate friend of Pope Nicholas IV (PRT, p. 236).

From Wadding we learn that in the beatification process of Blessed Conrad it was shown that this saintly friar and missionary converted more than 6,400 persons in Libya. The opinion has been expressed that they were descendants of the ancient church in northern Africa rather than Moslems.

Egypt

140. Missionary work in Lower, i. e. Northern, Egypt was begun by St. Francis himsef when he went to Damietta in 1219 and preached before the Sultan. Hence this mission field has always had a special attraction for the followers of the Poverello. The friary begun at Damietta in 1219 ceased to exist when the Crusaders lost the city. The same thing happened to the friary which was re-established by St. Louis IX of France in 1249. (Only in the 16th century was a permanent residence of the friars established in Egypt.)

141. Nevertheless, throughout the Middle Ages the friars were active in Egypt as envoys of kings and popes, as ministers to the Christian prisoners and merchants, and as preachers. Shortly after the end of the Crusades, when more friendly relations between the sultans of Egypt and the powers of Europe became possible, Franciscans came to minister to the Catholic prisoners in the country. In 1303, for instance, Friar Angelus of Spoleto and four other friars went to Egypt with letters from the kings of Aragon, Castile and Sicily, and were able to devote themselves to work among the Crusaders in Cairo and Alexandria who had been made prisoners at Tripoli, in Syria, Acre, in Palestine, and other places, — although they had to contend with the hatred of the populace. Fr. Simon Semeonis, an Englishman, who traveled through the Near East in 1322-1324, reported that when he arrived at Alexandria, he was spat upon and reviled. But there is no record that the sultans were hostile to the missionaries or the Christians, with the exception of some cases of warfare with western states.

142. The sultan's policy, however, did not save the missionaries from being put to death at different times by fanatical Moslems. Brother Francis of Spoleto won the martyr's crown at Damietta in 1288. Brother Livinus from France and Brother John of Monte Pulciano were killed at

Cairo in 1345. Three more lost their lives at the hands of the Moslems in the same city in 1358; they were Friar Nicholas of Monte Corvino, (PRT, p. 219) Friar Francis from the Province of Naples, and the Tertiary Brother Peter from Rome. The Spaniard, Friar John of Ottheo, suffered martyrdom at Cairo in 1370.

143. In the course of time pastoral work in Egypt was taken care of by friars from the Custody of the Holy Land, and by the end of the 15th century this had become the regular practice. Suriano writes, about 1485, that Fathers from Jerusalem came every year during Lent to preach to the Venetian merchants in Cairo and Alexandria and to administer the Sacraments to them.

144. Repeatedly, also, we find the friars engaged in trying to bring back the schismatics who were in Egypt. Eugene IV, in 1439, appointed Blessed Albert of Sarteano (PRT, 480) as his commissary in Egypt and other eastern countries. He arrived at Cairo in the summer of 1440 and had a satisfactory conference with the Coptic Patriarch John of Alexander in which he persuaded him to send messengers to the Council of Florence. With these messengers, and some also who represented the Coptic Archimandrite of Jerusalem, Blessed Albert returned to Italy, arriving at the Council on August 31, 1441. Abbot Andrew, leader of the envoys from Egypt, presented a favorable letter from the Coptic Patriarch stating that he accepted all the teachings of the Catholic Church. On February 4, 1442, the submission of the Coptic Patriarch to the Holy See was solemnly announced in the Church of Santa Maria Novella. Unfortunately, this union did not last long.

Ethiopia

145. During the 15th century Franciscan missionaries made numerous attempts to reach Ethiopia (Abyssinia) in order to convert its people who were steeped in the Monophysite heresy. As early as 1291, when Friar John of Montecorvino was in India, messengers came to him from Ethiopia with the request that he come in person to that country or send them some other good preachers. Since the death of St. Matthew and his disciples, they declared, the people of

Ethiopia had not been instructed in true Christian doctrine, but they earnestly desired to be genuine Christians. The first definite attempt to reach Ethiopia, however, was not made until the time of Eugene IV. This pope in 1439 had appointed Blessed Albert of Sarteano as his commissary, not only for Egypt and Jerusalem, but also for Ethiopia and India. Because of the opposition of the sultan of Egypt, Blessed Albert was not able to go on to Ethiopia; but, before returning to Italy, he assigned to his companion, Blessed Thomas Bellaci of Florence (PRT, 663), the task of trying to reach Ethiopia in a roundabout way, through Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Ormuz, and the Arabian Sea.

146. With three companions Blessed Thomas entered upon the difficult journey. Three times on the way they were taken prisoners. The first and second time, not being too far from Constantinople, they were freed after a short time through the influence of Florentine merchants in that city. The third time, however, being farther in the interior of Asia, they were held captives for a long time, and one of the companions of Blessed Albert died as a result of the hardships they had to endure. Finally, ransom money supplied by Eugene IV and sent by Blessed Albert of Sarteano on July 14, 1443, enabled them to regain their freedom and to return to Italy. The letter of the pope to the ruler of Ethiopia failed to reach its destination.

147. The successor of Eugene IV, namely Nicholas V, made another attempt in 1454, when he entrusted the same mission to Friar Louis of Bologna, then residing in Jerusalem; and this appointment was confirmed the following year by Calixtus III. Friar Louis started out, but through no fault of his own failed to reach Ethiopia. The greatest obstacle seems to have been the opposition of the Egyptian sultan to any communication between Ethiopia and the West.

148. Under the sultan Qat Bei (1468-1495), however, who was friendly to the Franciscans, this obstacle no longer existed; and in 1482 the first mission to Ethiopia finally reached that country. It came about in the following manner. In 1480 an Ethiopian pilgrim, who called himself the

nephew of the ruler in his country, was the guest of the Franciscans on Mt. Sion in Jerusalem. He told the friars that they would be wlcome in his country and could easily bring about a union with Rome; and he offered to take some friars back with him to Ethiopia. The superiors believed his story and appointed Friar Francis Sagar, a Spaniard, and Friar John of Calabria for the task. They were accompanied by a servant whose name was Battista of Imola; and this servant wrote an account of the journey which was published in Suriano's work. It begins at Cairo, where Friar Francis had to remain behind because of sickness. The party of which Friar John of Calabria was a member sailed up the Nile for thirty days as far as the beginning of the caravan route to Koser, the harbor city on the Red Sea. After an overland journey of five days they reached Koser, and there boarded a ship which took them in twenty-five days to Suakin. From there they went to the Ethiopian harbor of Achanon or Arkiko, whence they (Friar John and his companion) traveled on two camels, purchased for eight ducats, to the Ethiopian highlands and finally reached the residence of the king. It must have been a bitter disappointment for poor Friar John, when he was told, the king had died, his son Alexander was a minor, and the regency in charge of the government did not want to have anything to do with Rome. Still the missionary did not give up. He waited eight months for an audience, but it was in vain and he decided to return. On the way back, according to Mariano of Florence, he was captured and killed by heretics and infidels.

149. For the year 1480, Wadding also mentions a Brother Grifon, a Slav, who went along with a messenger who was returning to Ethiopia and was murdered on the way.

Canary Islands

150. The Canary Islands, first visited in 1341, were given as a fief to the French nobleman, John of Bethencourt, by King Henry III of Castile; and Bethencourt took possession of them in 1402. The first missionaries were the secular priest, John le Verrier, chaplain and companion of Bethencourt, and the Franciscan Peter Bontier, both of them

Frenchmen. These missionaries have left us a remarkable history of the first four years, giving an account of the conquest of the islands and the beginning of missionary work, of the difficulties they encountered, of a Catechism which they prepared for the natives, and of the gradual conversion of the people. (Published in Paris in 1630, copies of the rare work are in the Vatican Library.)

151. Bethencourt commenced the conquest on the northern island of Lanzerote. After the "king" of the island had been baptized in February, 1404, and many of his subjects had followed his example, Benedict XIII erected there the Diocese of Rubicon on July 7 of the same year. The first bishop was the Spanish Franciscan Fray Alfonso of Sanlucar de Barrameda. Learning of the benign treatment the natives of Lanzerote received at the hands of the conquerors, and convinced that they could not long withstand the arms of the French, the two chiefs of Fuerteventura, neighboring island to the south, likewise declared themselves ready to embrace the Christian religion. One of the chiefs was baptized on January 18, 1405, and the other on January 25; and their example was followed by many of the people.

152. Thinking that the conquest was assured, Bethencourt then decided to return to France. Calling together the chiefs, he gave them a touching farewell address, and then departed with a few companions amid the weeping of the islanders. Bethencourt was a nobleman in the best sense of the word. After his departure Spanish Franciscans continued their missionary work with such success that Pope Martin V could say in 1424, that the islands of Lanzarote, Fuerteventura and Ferro or Hierro ("Terra") were completely Christianized, while a portion of the people on the others, namely Gran Canaria, Tenerife ("Inferno"), Gomera and Palma, had likewise been converted. Hence he erected a second diocese, making the Church of Santa Maria de Bethencuria on Fuerteventura the cathedral, and the Franciscan Friar Martin de las Casas the first bishop. The previous year on April 9, 1423, the same pope had organized the Franciscan friaries founded on the Canary Islands with the approval of Benedict XIII into a special Vicarate, placing Friar John of Baeza at its head.

153. On the last four islands to be evangelized, the missionaries met great difficulties because of the exploitation of the natives by certain Spaniards which turned the natives not only against the Spaniards but also against Christianity. Papal pronouncements from the years 1434 and 1436 (Eugene IV), 1462 (Pius II), 1476 (Sixtus IV) took these settlers to task for imposing heavy burdens on the natives and enslaving them.

154. By 1455 Gomera had indeed become a Christian island, but additional decades passed before the remaining islands became wholly Christian. Gran Canaria especially was bitterly opposed to the Spaniards. In 1460 five Franciscans from the friary on Fuerteventura lost their lives on Gran Canaria, being cast into the sea. This island submitted only after it was conquered by the arms of Ferdinand (1479-1516) and Isabella.

155. On Tenerife Island, as Sixtus IV declared in 1476, missionary work proved successful despite obstacles; and this was due in great measure to the tireless apostolic work of Father Alfonso of Bolano, a Spanish Franciscan.

156. Another missionary of the Canary Islands, deserving of special mention, was St. Didacus (San Diego de Alcola) (PRT, p. 694). He was only a lay brother, but proved wonderfully apt in teaching the rudiments of Christianity to the natives (before 1450) and succeeded in converting large numbers of them. By his holy life and his miracles he exercised a profound influence. He served also as superior of the Franciscan friary on Fuerteventura. The Vicarate of the Canary Isands became a Province in 1553.

Portuguese Possessions

157. During the 15th century missionaries followed Prince Henry the Navigator (died 1463) to the islands off the west coast of Africa and also to the mainland. Only the beginnings of these missions are mentioned here, because their development belongs to the subsequent period.

158. The Azores Islands, occupied in 1431, and the Madeira Islands, occupied in 1418, were uninhabited when the Portuguese arrived and began to establish colonies. Franciscan friars were the first priests in both island groups;

and the friaries which they opened in each of the groups were eventually organized into regular provinces of the order. Dominican friars likewise came to the Madeira Islands.

159. Whether the Cape Verde Islands were inhabited when they were discovered in 1446 is doubtful. The first priests known to have come to these islands were the two Franciscans, Father Roger, a Frenchman, and Father James, a Catalonian. About 1460, Father Rogers won the martyr's crown at the hands of the Portuguese commandant who threw him into the sea because the priest had reprehended him for his scandalous and immoral life.

160. The first missionary in Guinea on the mainland, which territory is mentioned by Nicholas V already in 1454, was Friar Alfonso of Bolano, the Spanish Franciscan who labored also in the Canary Islands. Sixtus IV in 1472 states that missionary work here was making good progress.

161. At Elmina on the adjoining Gold Coast, discovered in 1472, Franciscan friars built a church in honor of St. Anthony of Lisbon and Padua in 1481.

162. To the Congo, discovered in 1484-5, King John II of Portugal sent the first missionaries in 1490. Whether these were Franciscan or Dominicans or Canons Secular can not be determined with certainty. They succeeded in baptizing the chief, his consort, and the heir to the throne; and although the chief fell back into polygamy, his son, baptized Alfonso, remained a good Christian and even saw his own son raised to the dignity of a bishop.

4.

Asia

Asia Minor

163. In 1233 Gregory IX sent Franciscans with letters to all the sultans of Africa and Asia. The only reply which is known came from the Seljuk sultan, Allaedin Keikobad (1219-1237) of Ikonium or Rum, which comprised a large part of Asia Minor. In May 1234 this sultan sent a respectful letter by a special messenger to the pope; and there were good prospects that missionaries would be allowed to work in this region. Unfortunately, this sultan died soon afterwards.

164. In the Grecian part of Asia Minor there was a Franciscan as well as a Dominican friary at Trebizond, on the southern shore of the eastern portion of the Black or Euxine Sea. Franciscan friaries were also at Samsun, farther west on the same shore, and at Fokia; likewise on Mytilene or Lesbos Island. The friars were able to found and maintain these centers because in these cities there were western colonies or consulates, and their work was restricted to the spiritual care of western merchants. In 1354, there were Franciscans also in Smyrna, because at that time the city was in the hands of the Genoese.

Palestine

165. Both the Dominicans and the Franciscans founded a missionary province of the Holy Land in the first part of the 13th century; and both of these provinces included a larger territory than Palestine. The Dominican province, founded by 1228 at least, comprised Palestine, Syria and the Island of Cyprus. Regarding the beginnings of the province little is known for certain. Friar Henry of Marsberg thrice

made a voyage across the Mediterranean to the Holy Land, after the erection of the province. In Palestine proper a house was opened about 1229 at the coast city of Acre in the Kingdom of Jerusalem which had been founded by the Crusaders. Here Blessed Jordan of Saxony was buried in 1237, when he died in a shipwreck after visiting the Holy Land. From 1229 to 1244, Dominicans also exercised the sacred ministry in Jerusalem. About 1237 the provincial, Friar Philip, brought about the union of the Jacobite Patriarch at Jerusalem with the Holy See. Friar Simon is known to have been in Jerusalem about 1244.

166. The Franciscans came to Palestine in 1219. When St. Francis arrived there in that year, some friars were already in the land. At the time of the death of St. Francis in 1226, there was but one province called "Ultramarina," which was soon (probably by 1239) divided into the three provinces of the Holy Land or Syria, Greece (called "Romania") and Slavonia (Dalmatia, since 1393).

167. The first period of Franciscan activity in Palestine lasted from 1219 until 1291, when the Crusaders' states ceased to exist. The second period began in 1335, and hence was separated from the first by an interval of forty-four years. During the first, it was restricted to the pastoral care of the Crusaders and merchants who were Latin Catholics. Already since the 12th century, the sultanate of Egypt (which included Palestine and Syria) had conceded factories to various European powers, and Catholic merchants had been assured of freedom to practice their religion and to have religious services. When the second period commenced the Franciscans also began to serve as guardians of the Holy Places and to take care of European pilgrims to the Holy Land. From 1244 to 1335, pilgrims to the Holy Places found ony priests of the Oriental rites in charge of the Holy Places.

168. At first the Franciscan Province of the Holy Land was not unlike the other provinces of the order, except that its members were recruited from the whole order. The so-called Custody of the Holy Land was established in 1377, though even after that date down to the end of the 19th century we find references to the Franciscan Province of the Holy Land as well. At the Chapter of Aquila, 1376, Friar

Bartholomew of Alverna was sent as commissary to the Holy Land; and there, with the assistance of the most able friars, he prepared special statutes in 1377. These made the guardian of Mt. Sion the superior of all the Holy Places in charge of the friars, and required that as a rule only twenty friars should serve as their custodians. This arrangement merely restricted the jurisdiction of the provincial; it did not abolish the office. As a matter of fact, the office was not rendered superfluous since the province had other establishments besides those which were at the Holy Places. In the course of time the Custos supplanted the provincial entirely. Today, of course, the Custos of the Holy Land is the superior, not only of those friars who are stationed at the Holy Places, but also of those who are at other places, for instance in Syria and Egypt, which likewise belong to the Custody of the Holy Land.

169. After the Observant Franciscans were definitely placed in charge of the Holy Places in 1439, the Observants who were in the Province of Greece and in territory lying to the east were united in 1461 with the "Province of the Holy Land." When the complete separation of Observant and Conventual Franciscans occurred in 1517, one of the Observant provinces was that of "the Holy Land." As late as 1897, mention is made of the Custody or Province of the Holy Land.

170. As early as 1222, or at least 1230, there was a Franciscan friary in Jerusalem. Gregory IX (1227-1241) desired that a large number of friars should go to the Holy Land and granted special indulgences to such as would go. The Crusaders took possession of Jerusalem in 1243; but the sultan of Egypt recaptured the city in the following year, and five thousand Christians, including all the Franciscans in the city were massacred. Some friars who were at Bethlehem and at Nazareth suffered the same fate in 1263. When the city of Safet surrendered in 1266, the Christians were assured that they could depart unmolested; but the Moslems did not keep their word. They made the Christians prisoners, and tried to force them to apostatize. Two Franciscans, Friar James of Puy and Friar Jeremias of Lecce, who were among the prisoners exhorted their companions to perse-

vere in the Faith and were so successful that only eight out of 3,000 joined the ranks of the Mohammedans. The rest, including the two friars, were massacred by the Moslems and won the palm of martyrdom.

171. The following year, 1267, Friar Conrad of Hallis and his six companions became martyrs. Jaffa fell into the hands of the Turks in 1268; and Acre, the last stronghold of the Crusaders, fell in 1291. Of the inhabitants of the latter city, some were killed and others were sold into slavery. Among the killed were fourteen Franciscans and all the nuns of the Poor Clare Monastery.

172. King Henry II of Cyprus and King Hayton II of Armenia, with the assistance of the khan of Persia, reconquered the Holy Land in 1299; and two Franciscans of Syria went to Europe to enlist the help of Crusaders for holding the conquest. But their efforts were in vain. Palestine once more came under the sway of the sultan of Egypt in 1301.

173. The age of the Crusades had passed. More friendly relations were now possible between the Christian powers and the sultan of Egypt. Sultan Nassir (1309-1341) permitted Latin Catholics to visit the Holy Places in Jerusalem and allowed priests to exercise the sacred ministry among Christian merchants and prisoners. Acceding to the request of King Robert of Naples and Jerusalem (1309-1343), brother of the Franciscan Bishop of St. Louis of Toulouse, and his pious wife Sancia, a princess of Mallorca, and moved by their gifts of money, Sultan Nassir, besides making other concessions, ceded to them what was left of the Basilica of St. Mary of Mt. Sion, which had been built by the Crusaders. Their agent in these transactions was Father Roger Garin of the Franciscan Province of Aquitaine. On his way to Armenia, this missionary went as a pilgrim to the Holy Land and remained there two years to carry on negotiations with the sultan for Robert and Sancia. Queen Sancia then built a new friary for twelve Franciscans on Mt. Sion and provided for its upkeep. Thus the Franciscans began their task as custodians of the Holy Places in 1335. Gradually they acquired rights at many other Holy Places.

174. From a bull of Clement VI, November 21, 1342, we learn that in 1342 they were not only in their friary on

Mt. Sion but also at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Likewise, that Robert and Sancia had received from the sultan also the Cenacle, the Chapel of the Descent of the Holy Ghost, and the place where the Risen Saviour had appeared to St. Thomas. The Franciscans immediately added the chapel where, according to tradition, Christ appeared to His Blessed Mother after His Resurrection; and soon afterwards they received from the Uniate Armenians an altar on Mt. Calvary. Before the end of the 14th century they also had the right to celebrate Mass inside the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, whereas previously they had to say Mass on an altar outside this chapel. In 1345 they were in possession of the basilica which the Empress Helena had built over the Grotto of the Nativity (it was definitely in their hands by 1427); and during the 14th century they also acquired the right to celebrate Mass every Saturday in the Church of the Tomb of the Blessed Virgin in the valley of Josaphat and to conduct religious services in the Grotto of Gethsemani. By the end of the 15th century they had obtained also the following: 1) the keys of the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre; 2) the right half of Mt. Calvary; 3) an altar in the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross; 4) their own altar in the Church of the Tomb of the Blessed Virgin; 5) their own altar in the Grotto of Gethsemani; 6) the sole possession of the key to the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem; 7) sole occupancy of the large convent adjoining the Grotto of the Nativity; 8) the key and free admission into the sanctuary of the Ascension on Mt. Olivet; 9) the same for the grave of Lazarus in Bethania; 10) the right to celebrate the feast of St. John the Baptist and of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin at Ain Karim, the home of the Precursor of Our Lord.

175. All of this was accomplished only at the cost of countless recurring hardships, vexations, persecutions and martyrdoms. No matter what was done to drive them away and to deprive them of their hard won rights, the guardians of the Holy Places loyally and perseveringly remained or returned to their posts. Whenever the Moslems suffered any misfortune at the hands of Christians, the custodians of the Holy Places had to pay for it.

176. In 1365, when King Peter I of Cyprus fitted out a

big fleet and made war on Egypt, capturing and burning Alexandria and attacking several coast cities of Syria, all of the sixteen friars then in Palestine were taken to Damascus, thrown into prison, burdened with chains, tortured with hunger, so that five years later only one of their number was still alive when a treaty between the king and the sultan set him free. Other friars then went to the Holy Land to take the place of those who had died.

177. Because some Catalonian ships had attacked the Moslems, the Sultan in 1422 had the portals of the churches of the Holy Sepulchre, of Mt. Sion, and of Bethlehem walled up, and the Franciscans, except the very old ones, taken as prisoners to Cairo. Some twenty years later, when Pope Eugene IV was trying to organize a Crusade, some of the friars were beaten with clubs while being led through the streets of Jerusalem, others were taken in chains to Cairo, and those at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre were dragged out by the hair across the floor of the church. In 1476, after some western ships had taken away four Moslem prisoners from Alexandria, all the Franciscans of Jerusalem and Bethlehem were again removed to Cairo; but this time the matter was settled soon afterwards, and the friars were permitted to return. In 1489 the Church of St. Jeremias was destroyed by the Arabs and all the friars at that place were murdered.

178. Attempts on the part of the friars to convert the Moslems to Christianity only increased the number of martyrs. Brother William of Castellamare preached Christian doctrine before the Pasha of Gaza in 1364; he was condemned to death and was cut in half. In 1391, November 14, Blessed Nicholas Tavileis of Sebenico (PRT, p. 741) and his three companions Friars Deodat of Rouvergne, Stephen of Cunis and Peter of Narbonne entered the mosque of Omar in Jerusalem and attempted to instruct the Moslems in the Catholic Faith; they were beaten by the furious mob with such ferocity that their lifeless bodies no longer had any semblance of human beings, and their corpses were thrown into a fire.

179. Not only did the friars tenaciously guard the Holy Places, but they also took care of the pilgrims in the best manner possible. For the sick and for pilgrims they built

St. Mary's Hospital near their friary on Mt. Sion and placed it in the care of Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis as early as 1353. Some years later the Moslems took it away from them; but in 1364 it was returned to the friars through the intervention of the King of Naples. Between 1392 and 1398, they also built a hospice for pilgrims at Ramleh.

180. When pilgrims arrived at Jaffa, friars were on hand to welcome them and to assist them with the first formalities. They advised them at Ramleh, where the pilgrims were often forced to wait for some time. They accompanied them to Jerusalem, provided lodgings for them, frequently also food and drink. They went along with the pilgrims to the various sanctuaries, served as guides, led the prayers, and were particularly solicitous that the pilgrims would derive great spiritual benefit from these visits. They accompanied the pilgrims also to Bethlehem, to Ain Karim, and to the Jordan River; and then returned with them to Jaffa, to see them off on their homeward voyage. A pilgrim in the year 1468, the Italian priest Antonio Buondelmonti, wrote in his diary that the friars take such tender care of the pilgrims that one almost believes he is in heaven; and a nobleman, Alexander by name, wrote in 1495, that it was impossible to describe in words the friendliness and brotherly love which the friars show to the pilgrims.

Cyprus

181. The house which the Dominicans founded at Nicosia on the Island of Cyprus in 1226, in the course of time became the principal establishment in their Province of the Holy Land. Eventually, also, a house of studies was opened here. Friar Nicholas de Marsiliaco was a lector here in 1303. It seems that about 1300 two other Dominican houses were founded on Cyprus, one at Famagusta and the other at Limasol. At about this time the whole province was apparently reduced to the Island of Cyprus. In the beginning the members of this province were friars of various nationalities, but in the 15th century they were mostly Italians.

182. After the fall of Acre in 1291, the Provincial of the Franciscan Province of the Holy Land likewise established his residence on Cyprus. But even here the friars were not

safe. At the beginning of the 15th century, all the Franciscans on Cyprus were massacred. The same thing happened again in 1405, in 1418, and in 1426.

Syria

183. Dominicans of the Province of the Holy Land had a house at Tripoli, in the Crusaders' County of the same name, from 1241 at least, until 1289, when the city was recaptured by the Turks. They were also at Antioch in 1264; and many of them became martyrs when Sultan Bibars attacked the city in 1268.

184. The Franciscans of the Province of the Holy Land likewise founded friaries at various places in Syria during the 13th century when the Crusaders had several states here. Such friaries were at Tyre, Sidon, Tripoli and Antioch. When these cities were reconquered by the sultans (Antioch in 1268; Tripoli in 1289; Tyre and Sidon in 1291), the friaries came to an end and the friars were either killed or enslaved (at Tyre and Sidon, probably).

185. At Aleppo, in Moslem territory, Friar Manasserius was working among the captive Crusaders in 1238. During the 13th century the friars often served as papal messengers in Syria. In 1233 some went to the sultans of Aleppo and Damascus with letters from Gregory IX. Others, sent by Innocent IV, went to the sultan of Homs in 1245; and in the summer of the same year Friar Dominic of Aragon went to Syria as papal legate. The latter was succeeded the following year by Friar Lawrence of Orte.

186. After the fall of Acre in 1291, the only house of the Franciscans in Syria during the rest of the Middle Ages was at Beirut (Beyrout), the harbor of Damascus. Many ships from Europe came to this harbor and many Christian merchants lived in this city. It was among the latter that the friars exercised the sacred ministry. Brother Nicholas of Poggibonzi found the friars here in 1345; and Friar Francis Suriano adds the information that the friars of Beirut every year helped many Christian slaves to escape.

187. The work of the friars among the Maronites of Mt. Lebanon in Syria is also deserving of special mention. Previously schismatics, the Maronites had submitted to the

Holy See in 1182; but certain abuses placed the union in jeopardy during the 15th century. Pope Eugene IV made Father Anthony of Troja his commissary for the Maronites, Druses and Syrians in 1440. And four years later, this pope appointed Father Peter Ferrarius of the Beirut friary to the same post. In 1450 Friar Grypho, a Fleming, came from Mt. Sion to Mt. Lebanon; and because of his tireless and successful work here during the last twenty-five years of his life he has received the title of Apostle of the Maronites. His successor, Friar Alexander de Ariostis, received his appointment from Sixtus IV and continued the work for three more years. (Later, Leo X (1513-1521) twice sent Father Francis Suriano to Lebanon as his commissary.) To Father Francis Suriano we are indebted for information concerning the missionary work among the Maronites (and also in other places of the East). He tells us also that every year during Lent the Franciscans ministered to the Venetian merchants who lived in Aleppo, Damascus and Tripoli. Father Suriano's work *Il Trattato di Terra Santa e Dell'Oriente* was published by Father Jerome Golubovich at Milan in 1900.

Persia

188. In a series of wars between 1220 and 1260, the Mongols under General Bachu-Noyan, Ilchi-Khatai, and Hulagu conquered Persia and the adjoining countries. Here they established the khanate of Persia, which surpassed the other Mongol khanates in culture and became the scene of flourishing Catholic missions for about a hundred years.

189. Hulagu was the first ruler of this khanate. He was the brother of Kublai-Khan; and from this Great Khan, in 1263, he received the title of Ilkhan (indicating that he belonged to the imperial family). Because of personal inclination, the influence of Christian mothers and wives, political considerations and common interests, Hulagu and his principal successors, although they were pagans or Mohammedans, showed themselves very favorable toward the oriental schismatic Christians as well as the Latin Catholics of the west. The Christian countries of Armenia and Georgia, lying to the north, acknowledged the suzerainty of the khan of Persia, and were allowed to retain their own kings. Catho-

lic missionaries, who were in Armenia and Georgia already during the first part of the 13th century, very probably extended their missionary work also to Persia proper during the reign of Hulagu; but no information concerning such work has come down to us. The first Catholic missionaries in Persia, of whom we have definite knowledge, went there under Hulagu's successor.

190. Previously, however, envoys from the Holy See went to Persia on two different occasions. In 1247 Pope Innocent IV sent the four Dominicans, Anselm (or Ascelin) of Lombardy, Simon of St. Quentin, Alberic, and Alexander to the Mongols. The papal messengers found General Bachu-Noyan in northern Persia on May 24th of that year; but their mission was not a successful one, and they were sent back in July with a proud reply to the pope.

191. However, when St. Louis of France arrived on Cyprus in September, 1248, General Ilchi-Khatai offered to join the Crusaders in their war against the Moslems. In January, 1249, St. Louis sent the Dominican, Andrew of Longjumeau, with some companions to the Mongol general and the Great Khan Kuyuk. At the latter court the envoys received only a haughty reply.

192. In 1256 Hulagu began his war with the Moslems. He destroyed the rule of the Assassins (probably in Khorassan), some Moslem states in middle Persia, and in Mesopotamia (between the Tigris and Euphrates), and took Bagdad, the city of the Caliphs, in Chaldea. He also stormed the cities of Aleppo and Damascus in Syria, but was then called away by the death of the Great Khan. General Ketboga, whom he left in charge, was defeated and lost his life near Sichem on September 3, 1260. This was the first defeat the Mongols had suffered, and it strengthened Hulagu's ties with the Christians when he returned to Persia. Hulagu's wife, Tokus Khatun, was a schismatic oriental Christian, and her influence gained many favors for the schismatics who dwelt in the khanate of Persia.

193. The successor of Hulagu, Abaka (1265-1282), a pagan, married a daughter of the Byzantine emperor, and sought to win the Catholics of Europe as his allies against the Turks. On three different occasions he communicated

with the Holy See in regard to this matter. His first message received an encouraging reply from Pope Clement IV in 1267. In 1274 Abaka sent sixteen messengers to the Council of Lyons. All of these seem to have been schismatic Christians except three prominent Mongols, one of whom was Abaka's spokesman; and these three were baptized by Cardinal Peter of Tarantasia. In 1277 Abaka sent the two Georgians, John and James Vassalli, to the pope; and this mission brought to Persia the first missionaries whose names are known to us. They were the five Franciscans, Gerard of Prato, Anthony of Parma, John of St. Agatha, Andrew of Forence, and Matthew of Arezzo. Pope Nicholas III wrote, in his reply of April, 1278, that since Abaka had asked for missionaries from Rome who would instruct him and his sons and his people in the Christian Faith, he was sending some Franciscans who were to exercise their apostolate in Persia, and later, if Abaka saw fit, they were to go on to Kublai Khan and preach the Faith in China. For some reason or other they never continued their journey to China, but went only as far as Persia. No doubt, there was enough work for them to do in Persia.

194. That other missionaries followed the five friars sent by Nicholas III or were already in Persia at the time is shown by the fact that two died as martyrs under Abaka's successor Achmed. The son of a Christian mother, he had been baptized and received the name Nicholas, but tried to gain the favor of the Moslems by becoming a Mohammedan. During his short reign (1282-1284) he persecuted the Christians and destroyed their churches or converted them into mosques. The two Franciscan missionaries, Anthony of Armenia and Aldobrand of Florence, died as martyrs.

195. Argun (1284-1291) returned to the policy of the earlier khans of Persia, and sent envoys to the pope and the kings of France and England in 1285, 1287-1288, 1289-1290, and 1290-1291. The letters which Nicholas IV sent in reply in 1288 and 1289 acquaint us with some interesting facts concerning the progress of the Persian missions. Argun had restored the Christian churches which his predecessor had destroyed or given to the Moslems, and to the missionaries he had granted full freedom in their task of propagating the

Catholic Faith. The Syrian Patriarch Jabalaha III was kindly disposed toward the Franciscan missionaries who were working in his territory, which apparently included Persia. The schismatic Armenian Bishop Dionysius at Tabris, the capital of the Persian khanate, had been converted to the Catholic Church by the Franciscans. Two princesses, Tuctan and Elegag, had likewise left the schismatics to become Catholics. Two Italian laymen, John de Bonastra and Jolus of Pisa, had distinguished themselves as benefactors of the missionaries. The latter lived in Persia and rendered valuable services to the friars.

196. The bearer of the letters of Nicholas IV in 1289 was the well known missionary Friar John of Montecorvino. Previously, about 1280 to 1289, he had been a very successful missionary in Persia and Armenia. He had become well versed in the languages of those countries, and frequently he had baptized several thousand persons within the space of a week or a month. In 1289 King Haython II of Armenia and Ilkhan Argun had sent him as their representative to the Holy See; and Pope Nicholas IV sent him back to Persia in July, 1289, with new missionaries and with twenty-six letters for various rulers in Asia, including Persia, Armenia, Georgia, and China. Father John of Montecorvino left Tabris for China in 1291, and became the first resident missionary in the Mongol capital of China.

197. In the same year in which Montecorvino departed for the court of Kublai-Khan (1291), Pope Nicholas IV sent to the East with thirty letters the two Franciscans, William of Chieri and Matthew of Chieti, and authorized them to take along additional friars. From a letter addressed to Argun, which these missionaries took along, we learn that several members of Argun's family had become Christians—Catholics, it seems, since the pope congratulated them. Among these converts were Argun's wife, Uruk Khatun, and his son Prince Nicholas.

198. When the new missionaries arrived in Persia, Argun had died and his brother Kaichatu (1291-1295) had succeeded him. This khan and Baydu (1295) were likewise friendly to the Christians. Gazan (1295-1304) however, a Moslem, at first persecuted the Christians. When he became khan

he immediately ordered the Christian churches and convents and also the pagan temples at Tabris to be destroyed. And because of this order and an uprising of the Moslems, the Christians lost many of their churches. But Gazan soon changed his mind and henceforth followed the example of his predecessors. He married the daughter of the king of Armenia, revoked his edict against the Christians, and sent two Franciscans as his envoys to Europe. Some even say that he became a Christian, when a son of his, who was disfigured when born, was transformed into a beautiful child after being baptized.

199. The next khan, Khodabendah or Elshaitu (1304-1316), was the son of Argun, formerly called Prince Nicholas. He was a Christian until the death of his mother, and then, like Gazan, became a Moslem; but he always remained friendly toward the Christians. This is also true of the rest of the Persian khans, although all of them were Mohammedans. And under these Mohammedan khans, missionary work in Persia, far from declining, was increased, although it seems to have been carried on mostly among the schismatics. Communication between the Persian khans and the papacy now ceased, but Abu-Said (1316-1336) made a treaty with Venice in 1320, in which the seventeenth article guaranteed freedom of religion to Christians in Persia and expressedly permitted Catholic missionaries to carry on their work. The influential Emir Choban seems to have been responsible in great measure for the friendliness of Abu-Said toward the Christians. Anyhow, according to the report of the two Franciscan missionaries, Friars James and Peter, this emir was himself very favorable to the Christians; and Pope John XXII sent him a special letter to thank him.

200. Despite the friendly attitude of the khans, martyrs among the missionaries were not lacking; however, these were put to death, not by the khans, but by fanatical Moslem mobs. The Franciscan Brother Francis of Borgo San Sepolcro won the martyr's crown at Tabris in 1314. In 1334, the English Franciscan, Friar William, became a martyr in Persia, after he had tried to preach the Catholic Faith to the Mohammedans. Blessed Gentle of Matelica, (PRT, 550), who preached in the language of Persia and had remarkable

success as a missionary in that country even among the Moslems, was put to death by Mohammedans in 1340. This missionary had come to Persia about 1328 with the Venetian envoy Cornaro, who later became the Doge of Venice. Another outstanding missionary in Persia during the early part of the 14th century was Blessed Odoric of Pordenone (PRT, 27). He labored as a missionary in Armenia and Persia for about eight years, 1314-1322; and then made his famous journey to China.

201. So great was the progress that the Persian missions had made by 1318, that on April 1st of that year Pope John XXII created the Archdiocese of Soltanieh. This city had recently been built by Khodabendah, and to it he had transferred the capital from Tabris. As first archbishop the pope named the vicar general of the Dominican Society of Travelers, Father Franco of Perugia; and to him he assigned six Dominican bishops to assist him in his work. They were Gerard of Calvi, William Adae, Bartholomew of Puy, Bernard of Piacenza, Bernard Moreti, and Bartholomew Abaliati. These bishops were placed in charge of some of the nine suffragan sees of Soltanieh, which were established in the course of time—all of them except one (Nakhitchevan in Armenia) by the same Pope John XXII. Just when the latter see was erected is not known. The suffragan sees included three in Persia, two in Armenia, two in Georgia, one in Khorassan, and one (Quilon) in India. The three suffragan sees in Persia, like Soltanieh, were in the northern part of the country, in the part called Azerbijan. They were at Tabris, Maragha, and Dikhargan.

202. While most of the missionaries in Persia up to this time had been Franciscans, a large number of Dominicans now came into the country. When John XXII asked the general chapter of the Dominicans, held at Toulouse in 1328, for fifty missionaries who were to be sent to the Orient, many more volunteered on the spot. Of the fifty who were chosen, the greater number probably went to Persia.

203. In all of Persia (including Armenia, Georgia, and Chaldea), according to Clement VI, the Dominicans and the Franciscans each had fifteen friaries or mission centers in 1349. In Persia proper the Dominicans had a house in

each of the cities that was the seat of a diocese; the Franciscans had friaries at Soltanieh, Tabris, and Salmas. The location of other mission centers in Persia proper, if there were such, is not known. Of the total number of Dominican houses, we know only where six out of the fifteen were; and of the Franciscan houses, eight out of the fifteen. According to Elemosina, Franciscans and Dominicans dwelt for a while in the same convent. Jordan reports that there were beautiful churches at Soltanieh and Tabris. He tells us also that the Armenian converts of the missionaries of both orders in Tabris and Ur (a journey of two days distant from the old capital) was 1,000 and at Soltanieh five to six hundred. The Franciscan houses in the entire khanate of Persia belonged to the Vicarate of East Tatary, which included also Asia Minor and Constantinople.

204. A great blow to the missions in the khanate of Persia was the Black Death which raged also in this part of the world. In 1349, Clement VI wrote that the ony priests left in Persia were three Dominicans. Although Europe too had lost a great number of its priests, some new missionaries were sent to Persia. But in 1390 Bartholomew of Pisa recorded the fact that several of the Franciscan houses in Persia were no longer occupied. The invasions of Tamerlane (died 1405) completely destroyed the Persian missions that had survived; and the conquests of the Ottoman Turks made it impossible to restore them.

205. The Archdiocese of Soltanieh is mentioned once more in 1410, when Archbishop John was placed also over the dioceses in Kipchak. But in 1431 the Genoese government requested the Holy See to make Kaffa an archdiocese, because it was a large city and the bulwark of Christianity, whereas the town of Sotanieh was inhabited only by infidels and hardly accessible to Christians, and the archbishop was continually in exile and could not be found. Ambrose Contareni, who went to Persia in 1473 as the envoy of Venice, described Soltanieh but made no mention of an archbishop or a church or Christians in that city.

Khorassan

206. Lying to the east of Persia proper, Khorassan be-

longed at first to the Ilkhanate of Persia, but it always remained a bone of contention between the two khanates of Persia and Turkestan. In 1329, Elchigadan who called himself "Khan of Khorassan, Turkestan and Hindustan" sent two Dominicans to the pope to ask the Holy Father for his blessing, to inform him that he wished to be instructed in the Catholic religion, and to assure him of his friendly sentiments toward the Dominican and Franciscan missionaries who were working in his khanate. Pope John XXII then (1329) erected the diocese of Meshed, comprising all of Khorassan, as a suffragan see of Soltanieh, and made one of the envoys, Friar Thomas Moncasola, its first bishop. He sent the bishop back with a letter in which he expressed his thanks to the khan for his kindness toward the missionaries. This diocese, however, lasted only for a short time.

Chaldea

207. Dominican friars arrived in Chaldea or Mesopotamia, the country lying between the Tigris and Euphrates, before 1233; for, in that year Pope Gregory IX addressed a letter to them. Later, when Hulagu took Bagdad, the city of the Caliphs, he spared the houses of the Nestorian Christians who lived there and saved the lives of the Nestorians in a well protected church. These Nestorians received the Dominican missionary Ricold in a friendly manner and even permitted him to preach in their church. But when he called the Blessed Virgin the Mother of God in one of his sermons, they drove him out and washed the church with rose water. Besides Nestorians, Ricold found in the city of Bagdad also Jews and over 200,000 Moslems. Apparently the pagan Mongols did not settle here, although Chaldea belonged to the khanate of Persia. One of the fifteen centers which the Dominicans had in this khanate in 1349 was at Bagdad.

Armenia

208. By Armenia is meant the country just north of Persia, also called Greater Armenia to distinguish it from Lesser Armenia which lay in Asia Minor north of the Island of Cyprus. Lesser Armenia has also been known as Cilicia. The Armenians, who were schismatic Christians, were in

fact scattered over a bigger area than that of the two Armenias during the Middle Ages. At this time we find them also in Crimea and in Azerbijan (northern Persia).

209. In Armenia (Greater Armenia) there were Dominican missionaries before the year 1233, when Gregory IX wrote a letter to the Dominicans in Armenia and Chaldea. During the rest of the 13th and throughout the 14th centuries Dominican and Franciscan missionaries continued to work faithfully in Armenia. The Franciscans succeeded in uniting Armenian Archbishop Zacharias of St. Thaddeus with the Holy See; and the Dominican Jordan estimated the number of these schismatics who were converted by the friars of both orders as being over 4,000 in Armenia alone. The Franciscan minister general Raymond Gaufredi (Godefroy), 1289-1295, had sent the leaders of the so-called Spiritual Franciscans to the Orient because they were zealous friars; and they did good work as missionaries until twelve Spirituals were removed from Armenia in 1333 because of their opposition to Pope John XXII.

210. On March 15, 1314, at Ersingjan in Armenia, the three Franciscans, Anthony of Milan, Monald of Ancona and Francis of Petriolo, were tortured and killed by the Moslems after they had tried to preach the Christian Faith to them.

211. After the Archdiocese of Soltanieh was created in 1318, two suffragan sees were erected in Armenia, one at Sivas (Sebaste) and one at Nakhitchevan. Since the incumbents of these sees were Dominicans, there was no doubt a Dominican house at both places. Franciscan friaries were at Erzerum, Karakilissa and Sivas.

212. Among the Uniate Armenians a new religious order, called the United Brethren of St. Gregory the Illuminator, was founded in the first part of the 14th century. According to some authors, the Dominican Blessed Bartholomew the Small of Bologna (who died in 1333 as Bishop of Maragha in Persia), with the assistance of the Armenian prince John of Kherni whom he had converted, founded the new order in 1330. However, the Dominican historian, Father Walz, says that Blessed Bartholomew merely prepared the way, and Abbot John of the Monastery of St. Basil at Kherni was

the real founder. On a journey to Europe, this Armenian abbot had admired the life of the western friars; and after his return, he and his monks adopted a similar way of life, based on the rule of St. Augustine and the constitutions of the Dominicans. They made their profession before the Dominican, John of Florence, Bishop of Tiflis, who was their first provincial superior; and they wore the habit of Dominican lay-brothers. Two of the United Brethren, Thomas and Eleutherius, went to the Roman Curia in 1356, and obtained the concession that the Dominican master general, personally or through a vicar, exercise the offices of visitor, corrector and reformer of the new order; otherwise the two orders remained distinct. Later, it is true, when wars and persecutions came, individual United Brethren could easily join the ranks of the Dominicans. Though others give much higher figures, Father Walz estimates the total number of United Brethren as having been about one hundred in 1374. According to Mandonnet, the United Brethren still existed in the 18th century.

213. The United Brethren made the mistake of substituting the Latin for the Armenian rite, and denying the validity of the Sacraments administered by schismatic Armenian priests. Thus they turned some of their own members and of the Armenian people against the order. John Kachik, for instance, left the order and became its most vehement and successful opponent.

214. The better to acquaint the Armenians with the Roman liturgy and with Catholic doctrine, the missionaries headed by Blessed Bartholomew and the Franciscan Friar Pontius, translated numerous Latin works into the Armenian language.

215. The Armenian missions flourished especially under Pope John XXII, and came to an end with the disastrous invasions of Tamerlane in 1386-1387. They are mentioned for the last time in 1383, when the Armenian Franciscan, Friar John Kador, who had converted many of his countrymen to the Catholic Church, died as a martyr.

Lesser Armenia

216. The friars also did missionary work in Lesser Ar-

menia, on the southern coast of Asia Minor in the eastern part of the Mediterranean. John XXII gave the Dominican Raymond Stephani the task of establishing, with the aid of other Dominicans, Latin schools in Lesser Armenia. The Franciscan Friar Pontius, who had been a missionary in Greater Armenia, was made Archbishop of Seleucia in Lesser Armenia. And the union of the Armenians with the Holy See which was effected in 1439 no doubt has reference to Lesser Armenia. This union was due especially to the efforts of the vicar general of the Observant Franciscans, Father James of Primadizzi, whom the pope had sent to the Orient in 1437.

Georgia

217. The Dominicans went to Georgia, the country lying north of Greater Armenia, in 1240 and established themselves in the capital, Tiflis. They had a house there in the 14th century; and so did the Franciscans, who had another friary at Achalzieh. The Georgians were friendly toward the Europeans, and according to Jordan all of them were Christians; but there were also Moslems and Greeks in the country. And after the Moslems, the Greeks were the most bitter opponents of the Latin missionaries. In 1288 the Greeks in Georgia, out of hatred for the Catholic Church, put to death the two Franciscans, Conrad of Saxony and Stephen of Hungary.

218. Following the establishment of the Archdiocese of Soltanieh, two suffragan sees were erected in Georgia, one at Tiflis and the other at Sebastopolis. The latter city, the ancient Dioskurias, was a Genoese trading place on the east coast of the Black Sea. Its ruins are the present Suchum Kale.

219. In 1330, the first bishop of Sebastopolis, the English Dominican Peter Gerald, wrote a letter to the bishops of his homeland, on the feast of St. Edward, King of England. He says the Greeks were the most influential people in the city, but the Georgian official was friendly toward him and had expressed his willingness to join the Crusaders with his own army and also to take steps for union with the Holy See. He had donated a cemetery for the Catholics, and three dif-

ferent times the bishop had set up a cross in this cemetery; but the Greeks with the acquiescence of the Jews and Moslems had thrown it down each time. The bishop was very poor; he had neither a house nor a church nor any income. He kept alive with the little offerings which some poor Georgians gave to him on Sundays. The Christians suffered much at the hands of the Moslems.

220. The Diocese of Sebastopolis is mentioned for the last time in the early 15th century, although the invasions of Tamerlane at the end of the 14th century practically wiped out the Georgian missions.

India

221. The first medieval missionary in India was the Franciscan Father John of Montecorvino, who left Tabris in Persia in 1291 and journeyed to China by way of India—the first to take the sea route to the Far East. He was accompanied by the Dominican Nicholas of Pistoja and the Italian merchant Peter of Lucalongo. They stopped at Meliapur on the east coast of India and visited the Church of St. Thomas. Here Friar Nicholas of Pistoja died, and Montecorvino buried his companion in St. Thomas Church. For one whole year Montecorvino remained in India, preaching the Gospel at various places and baptizing about one hundred persons. With Lucalongo he then continued his journey to China.

222. Of the bishops and friars who were sent by Clement V in 1307 to the aid of Montecorvino in China, three bishops and a number of friars died in India while on their way to China.

223. In 1320 or 1321, the Dominican Friar Jordan Catalani of Severac and the four Franciscans, Blessed Thomas of Tolentino (PRT, 215), who had been a missionary in Armenia since 1290, Friar James of Padua, Friar Peter of Siena, and the Armenian Friar Demetrius, landed at Thana on the island of Salsette, not far from Bombay. Jordan, who spoke the Arabian language, went north with two Nestorians to begin his missionary work in India, while the Franciscans remained at Thana to wait for an opportunity to continue their voyage to China; but all four became martyrs

at the hands of Mohammedans in April, 1321. Hearing of their death, Jordan returned to Thana, found the bodies of three of the martyrs, and gave them Christian burial.

224. In a letter, written October 12, 1321, Jordan reported that he had baptized over 120 persons and prepared others for Baptism. According to his letter of January 20, 1323, he was still at Thana and the number of those he had baptized was 130. Eventualy some Dominicans came to his assistance, and in his *Mirabilia* Jordan says that about 10,000 persons were converted to the Catholic Faith. Only casually does he mention that five Dominican friars died as martyrs. He himself was imprisoned four times by the Moslems.

225. After spending some years in India, Jordan made a journey to Rome in order to report on the progress and the opportunities of the missions in India. John XXII then (August 9, 1329) erected the diocese of Quilon as a suffragan see of Soltanieh and made Jordan its first bishop. Quilon is in Travancore, southern India; and at the time of Bishop Jordan, there were many Nestorians in the city.

226. Meanwhile Blessed Odoric of Pordenone and his Irish companion, Friar James, had visited India about 1323. He recovered the bodies of the four martyrs of Thana and took them along to Zaitun, China.

227. The Diocese of Quilon did not last long. Bishop Jordan was the ony bishop of whom there is any record. When Father John Marignolli returned to Europe from China, he stopped at Quilon in 1347 and remained there for thirteen months. He mentions that in the Latin Church of St. George, which had beautiful paintings, he preached the word of God and conducted divine services. He also baptized a pagan after instructing him for three months. Apparently there were some Dominican missionaries still at Quilon at the time; for, when he departed, he bade farewell to the brethren (friars?). But he says nothing of a bishop. No other reference to the medieval missions in India is made in available records.

Mongolia

(Northern China)

228. The Tatars (more correct than Tartars) or Mongols

were originally but one of many Turkish nomadic tribes in the interior of Asia. At the end of the 12th century one of the Tatar chieftains, Temuchin by name, gained the leadership over all the Tatars as well as neighboring peoples. At a great gathering of the Tatars in 1206, he received the title of Genghis Khan or Jenghiz Khan (meaning "very powerful monarch"). He then commenced to conquer the world; and he and his successors came closer to doing it than any other conquerors in the history of the world.

229. First he subjugated Cathay (northern China proper) and all the countries of central Asia as far as the Ural River. In 1222 the Mongols entered Europe and defeated the Russians on the Kalka River. After Ogotai-Khan had succeeded his father Genghis Khan in 1227, a numerous Mongol army under Batu, the nephew of Genghis Khan, launched a campaign against Europe in 1237, advanced through the country of the Ruthenians and through Poland as far as Silesia, and devastated Hungary.

230. The death of Ogotai in 1241 caused Batu to return to Mongolia for the election of a new Great Kahn; and this gave Europe a period of respite. The new Great Khan, Kuyuk, was not installed until five years later. It was at this time that Innocent IV sent Friar John of Piano di Carpine, a disciple of St. Francis, to the court of the Great Khan with a message of peace. He left Lyons, France, on Easter Day, 1245; and with Friar Benedict of Poland, he made the long journey, via Kiev (where he was on February 4, 1246), across the steppes of Asia, to the court of the Great Khan at Karakorum (Ho-lin) in central Mongolia. Here they arrived on July 22, and witnessed the elevation of Kuyuk to the office of Great Khan on August 22. A fortnight later they were granted an audience with Kuyuk and the opportunity of presenting the message of the Father of Christendom. Kuyuk's answer was a haughty one, but his mother offered some gifts to the pope's representatives. Father John of Piano di Carpine and his companion were the first Europeans to journey to the Far East; they opened communication between the East and the West; and they brought back to Europe the first reliable information concerning the mysterious East. About the middle of Novem-

ber they left Karakorum, and reached Kiev on June 9, 1247. At the beginning of November in the same year, after an absence of two and a half years, they were back at the papal court.

231. In the same year in which Father John of Piano di Carpine returned to Europe, King Haython I of Armenia sent his brother Sinnibald to Kuyuk in the interests of his country and Armenia. And in September, 1254, King Haython himself appeared at Karakorum and entered an alliance with the Mongols against the Moslem Turks, which saved his country from an invasion.

232. When St. Louis IX of France was on the Island of Cyprus in 1249, he sent the Dominican Longjumeau to the court of the Great Khan in an attempt to win the Mongols as allies in the war against the Turks. Friar Andrew was accompanied by two other Dominicans whose names were John and William, two secular priests, and two royal officials. When they arrived at Karakorum, Ogoul Gaimish, the widow of Kuyuk who had died in 1248, was managing the affairs of government. She received the messengers kindly enough, but sent a proud reply to St. Louis. The embassy returned to Caesarea, Palestine, in 1251, after the liberation of St. Louis from captivity.

233. A Flemish Franciscan from Brabant, Father William Rubruk, who had accompanied St. Louis on his Crusade, was the leader of a third party which journeyed from Europe to the court of the Great Khan. Originally the group included a confrere, Friar Bartholomew of Cremona, a young cleric whose name was Gossel, a servant called Nicholas, and a poor interpreter. It was their aim to establish Catholic missions among the Mongols in Kipchak; and they started out from Constantinople on May 7, 1253. But when they reached the camp of Sertak on July 31, Gossel and Nicholas were retained there and the others were referred to the Great Khan. In December, Rubruk and his two companions arrived at the camp of the Great Khan Mangu, a day's journey distant from Karakorum. Incidentally, they found there also some messengers from the Byzantine Emperor. The welcome which Rubruk received was gracious enough; and he was permitted to stay for several months, during

which time he had several audiences with Mangu. He went along with Mangu's retinue to Karakorum, and on the vigil of Pentecost had a public debate with Buddhists and Taoists. On Easter Day he had administered the Sacraments to a number of Catholics who were in Mangu's camp; and while he was with the khan's party he received six persons into the Church. But Rubruk's desire to remain as a missionary was not fulfilled. He was forced to depart and began the return journey to Palestine on July 9 or 10, 1254, while poor Father Bartholomew was so sick that he could not go along. Nothing more was ever heard of the latter. On the way back in Armenia, Rubruk met five Dominicans who were going to Karakorum to work there as missionaries; but when they learned that Rubruk had not been allowed to devote himself to such work at the Mongol capital, they did not continue their journey. Rubruk went on to Cyprus, was present at a chapter held at Tripoli in 1255, and at Acre wrote the famous account of his journey. This he took along to Paris later on.

Cathay

(Northern China proper)

234. At the death of Genghis Khan in 1227, his great empire was divided between his two sons Chagatai and Ogotai. The former was made khan of Turkestan (central Asia, including Sinkiang or Chinese Turkestan), and the latter succeeded his father as Great Khan (Kha-Khan) and ruler of Cathay and Mongolia. Subsequently Batu, a nephew of Genghis Khan, became khan of Kipchak (southern Russia); and Hulagu, a brother of Mangu and Kublai, was made Ilkhan of Persia. In the beginning these khanates were all united, at least to some extent, under the Great Khan. Afterwards they carried on wars with each other.

235. In 1264, Kublai Khan, who succeeded Mangu in 1260, transferred the capital from Karakorum in Mongolia to Yenking in the northern part of China proper, which was known during the Middle Ages as Cathay.

236. The first Europeans to travel to China proper were the two Venetian merchants, Nicolo Polo and Maffeo Polo. They arrived at the new capital of the Great Khan about

1266, and were kindly received by Kublai. The latter even requested them to ask the pope for a hundred teachers of science and religion who might instruct the people of the Mongol Empire in the learning of Europe and in the Christian Faith. With Gacaya, one of Kublai's courtiers, the Polo brothers set out for Europe in 1266 and arrived at Acre, Palestine, in 1269. Clement IV had died the preceding year, and the Polos went on to Venice to await the election of a new pope. This election was delayed for an unusually long time, but on September 1, 1271, Gregory X finally ascended the chair of Peter. The new pope immediately gave the Polos a letter for Kublai as well as two missionary companions, the Dominicans Nicholas of Nicosia (or Vicenza) and William of Tripoli, who were at Acre at the time. The Polos also took along Marco, the son of Nicolo, who was then only a boy of fifteen.

237. When they reached Armenia, they learned that the sultan of Egypt had invaded that territory, and the two Dominicans thought it best to retrace their steps. The three Polos, however, continued their journey, and after four years managed to reach Shandu, Kublai's summer palace and later followed him to the capital. During the absence of the Polos, Kublai had added a magnificent imperial city, called Taidu, to the ancient Chinese city of Yenking, renaming the whole Khan-baliq, meaning "city of the Khan" and often spelled "Cambaluc." Later on, under the first Ming emperor it received the name Peking, "northern capital."

238. For seventeen years Marco Polo lived at the court of Kublai and traveled in China. After an absence of twenty-four years he returned to Venice, and while he was a prisoner of the Genoese for three months he wrote his famous book of travels. But as is evident from the above, he was not the first traveler to go from Europe to the Far East, not even to China proper.

239. Because of various hindrances and difficulties, the first Catholic missionary did not reach Khan-baliq till 1294. He was the well known Franciscan, Father John of Montecorvino. Marco Polo had left and Kublai Khan had died shortly before, but his successor, Timur (1294-1307), ex-

tended a friendly welcome to the papal messenger and permitted him to remain as a missionary.

240. A Nestorian bishopric had been erected at Khanbaliq in 1275, and it had been raised to the rank of an archbishopric in 1280; and the Nestorians were not at all pleased when a Catholic missionary established his residence at the capital. For five years certain Nestorians did everything they possibly could to obstruct the missionary work of Montecorvino. The attacks on the friar ceased only when the Nestorians in question together with their families were banished by Timur.

241. Montecorvino, however, did not lose any time in beginning his apostolic labors. He commenced by studying the Uigur (Vigur) language and soon became so well versed in it that he could make a translation of the entire New Testament and the Psalter, and was able to preach to the Mongols in their own tongue.

242. By 1299 he had built his first church and residence. He then purchased forty pagan boys (probably Chinese, since the conquerors would hardly sell their children), baptized them, and instructed them in the Latin rite. By hand he wrote two copies of the entire Breviary and thirty copies of the Psalter for these boys, and together with them he chanted the Divine Office as was done in the convents of Europe. By 1304 eleven of these choir boys knew how to chant the Office by themselves. The Great Khan was much pleased with their singing, and permitted Montecorvino to build a second church and residence near his own palace. The missionary assigned some of the choir boys to the new establishment, and himself conducted divine services alternately at both places. First he built at the same place an oratory big enough for 200 persons, and several other houses; and at the same place he then erected his second big church, which was almost complete in 306.

243. Montecorvino's first converts were a large number of Alans, schismatic oriental Christians of the Near East, who had been brought to khan-baliq by the Mongol conquerors; and these formed the nucleus of the first Catholic community in China, which by 1305 counted 6,000 members. The Great Khan also gave Montecorvino permission to

preach in the pagan temples, and according to a contemporary (the Dominican, John of Cora) the pagans listened to the missionary willingly and attentively.

244. For ten years Montecorvino was the only Catholic priest in Khan-baliq, although he trained native catechists and teachers besides the choir boys. The first Franciscan to come to his assistance was Friar Arnold of Cologne, who joined him in 1303. After Montecorvino's first extant letter, dated January 8, 1305, reached the west, several Dominicans started out for Cathay; but in Kipchak they turned back because of the wars which were being waged at the time. Montecorvino's second letter, in which he reports that between All Saints Day, 1305, and February, 1306, he had baptized 400 persons, reached the friars at Tabris in Persia not long after, and was carried by Blessed Thomas of Tolentino to the Holy See.

245. After hearing of Montecorvino's extraordinary success, Clement V, on July 23, 1307, created the Archdiocese of Khan-baliq and named Montecorvino its first archbishop. At the same time he sent seven Franciscan bishops to China to assist "the apostle of China" in his work. For an unknown reason, one of the bishops remained behind; but the other six, with a large number of Franciscans, set out for China. Unfortunately three of the bishops and some of the friars died in India. The three bishops who survived were Gerard Albuini, Andrew of Perugia, and Peregrin of Castello. The first of these remained at Zaitun in southeastern China, but the other two arrived at Khan-baliq in 1308 and consecrated Father John of Montecorvino Archbishop of Khan-baliq. They remained with the archbishop and assisted him for the next five years.

246. Missionary work could now be carried on in China on a more extensive scale. For a while longer at least the archbishop himself devoted all his attention to the conversion of the many Armenians who were in the capital; and a third church was built in the city. A suffragan see was established in southeastern China, and later another see in western China. By 1322 at least, there was a church and friary also at Cansy (the present Hangchow), an important trading center on the Grand Canal; and there are good

reasons for thinking that there were missionaries also at Yangchow and Lintsing.

247. At the end of 1310 or the beginning of 1311 Clement V appointed three more Franciscan bishops for China; but only one of these, Peter of Florence, reached China. He arrived at Khan-baliq probably in 1313, certainly before 1317. During the last three years of his life (1325-1328), Archbishop Montecorvino was assisted also by the famous missionary and traveler, Blessed Odoric of Pordenone (PRT, 27), and probably by his companion, Friar James of Ireland. Returning to Europe in order to enlist new missionaries for China, Blessed Odoric arrived in Italy after an absence of sixteen years, and died in Padua in 1330. But before he died he wrote an account of his travels, which is one of the outstanding travel books of the Middle Ages.

248. At the age of eighty-two, Archbishop Montecorvino died at Khan-baliq in 1328. He had outlived the first three bishops who were sent to help him, and he had spent thirty-five years in Cathay as a missionary, twenty of them as an archbishop. At the time of the archbishop's death, the Dominican John of Cora was visiting the Mongol capital; and he reported that a great throng of Christians and pagans attended the archbishop's funeral, and the pagans rent their garments to indicate their sorrow. Christians and pagans reverently kept relics of the great missionary and continued to visit his tomb. Seventeen years later, Marignolli found that Mongols and Alans still honored Montecorvino as a saint.

249. In 1333, John XXII named the Franciscan Friar Nicholas successor to Archbishop Montecorvino. Archbishop Nicholas set out for Cathay in 1334 and got as far as Sinkiang in western China. But by 1336 he had not yet arrived at Khan-baliq; for, in that year, five Catholic Alans in the capital sent a letter to the Holy See and asked for a new archbishop. Since he was not sure that Archbishop Nicholas had died, Benedict XII sent the Franciscan John Marignolli as his legate with a number of missionary friars. They began their journey at the end of 1338; and Marignolli spent the years from 1342 to 1346 at Khan-baliq. Besides several other churches in the capital, he found a cathedral

near the khan's palace and a beautiful archiepiscopal residence, but no archbishop. Marignolli was back in Europe in 1353; and after he had made his report to Innocent VI, the pope requested the general chapter of the Franciscans for missionaries who were to go to China, some of them were to be consecrated bishops. The Black Death had just carried off a large number of the friars in Europe. Whether any bishops or missionaries were sent to China at this time we do not know. The fact that a bishop was appointed for the suffragan see in southeastern China and set out for China at least in 1362 is a good indication that an archbishop had also been provided for Khan-baliq.

250. In 1370 Urban V named the French Franciscan theologian, William du Prat, Archbishop of Khan-baliq, and instructed him to take along to China some theologians and about sixty other friars. But they were never able to enter China. In 1368 the Ming dynasty, which continued to rule China till 1644, had supplanted the Mongol dynasty; and for Europeans China became a closed country until the end of the 16th century.

251. There is no reason, however, for thinking that the first Ming emperor persecuted the Catholics and the Catholic missionaries who undoubtedly were in China in 1368. The missions in China must have died out only gradually because there were no new missionary priests to take the place of those who died. There are not a few indications, in fact, that, like the Nestorians, the Catholics in China were able to practice their religion for a long time after 1368.

Tenduk

(Central China)

252. During the very first year of his sojourn in China (1294), Father John of Montecorvino gained a signal victory in the interior of China. A journey of some twenty days distant from the capital of Cathay lay the capital of the Nestorian kingdom of Tenduk, probably the city of Tokoto (Tokhto), later on called Toucheng. Tenduk comprised the territory that is now divided into the Chinese provinces of Shansi, Shensi, and Kansu. Its people were the Onguits; and its ruler, King George, was a vassal of the Great Khan.

Montecorvino easily won this king over to the Catholic Faith, and even conferred minor orders on him.

253. Braving the opposition of his former co-religionists who branded him as an apostate, King George became a real apostle of his country, leading a large number of his subjects into the true fold; and, as Bishop Peregrin of Castello wrote, converting several thousands in a single day. With royal munificence he constructed a beautiful church in honor of the Most Holy Trinity, and called it the "Roman Church" in homage to the Vicar of Christ and to indicate the sincerity of his own conversion. Montecorvino celebrated Mass in this church according to the Latin rite, although he probably used the language of the place; and the king, clothed in sacred vestments, assisted him at the altar. Montecorvino also made arrangements with the king to translate the entire Latin Office into the language of Tenduk, that it might be chanted throughout the kingdom.

254. Unfortunately, King George was killed in battle a few years later (1298), leaving as his heir and successor an infant son whom he had named John to honor Montecorvino. The brothers of the deceased king were thus given a free hand in destroying what the royal convert had accomplished; and the people of Tenduk were forced to adopt Nestorianism once more.

Manzi

(Southern China)

255. When Mangu was Great Khan, the Sung Kingdom in Manzi or southern China was still independent. Mangu Khan entrusted the campaign against southern China to his brother Kublai, but even Kublai did not completely conquer the Sung Kingdom until 1279, nineteen years after he had become Great Khan.

256. One of the most important cities of southern China at this time was the seaport of Zaitun on the southeastern coast (the present Chang-Chow or Chüanchowfu, near Amoy, Zin Fokien Province, opposite Formosa Island). When the first bishops and friars who were sent to the aid of Montecorvino arrived at Zaitun in 1308, one of the bishops, Gerard Albuini, and probably some of the friars remained in that

city and made it the scene of their missionary labors. Thus, with the approval of Archbishop Montecorvino, Zaitun became the first suffragan see of Khan-baliq.

257. As in Khan-baliq, so also here the first converts were Alans who had been sent to Zaitun by Kublai Khan. A rich Armenian lady built a beautiful and spacious cathedral for Bishop Albuini, and provided for his material needs as well as those of his missionaries. Besides the names of the bishops of Zaitun, those of at least three missionary friars are known to us. They are John Grimaldi, Emanuel of Monticulo, and Ventura of Sarezana. The last mentioned was the first native of China to become a Franciscan.

258. Besides the cathedral in the city of Zaitun, the missionaries also received a grove one-fourth of a mile from the city; and here they built another beautiful church and a large friary with rooms for twenty friars and four rooms for prelates. Bishop Peregrin of Castello reported that the friars were able to preach even in the mosques of Zaitun, although, as Bishop Andrew of Perugia wrote, they were unable to make converts among the Moslems and Jews. The latter bishop adds, however, that the missionaries baptized numerous pagans. These converts must have been native Chinese, since the early Turkish historian Munedjimbashi tells us that the Mongols in Zaitun remained pagans.

259. Bishop Albuini died in 1313 and was succeeded by Bishop Peregrin of Castello. Bishop Andrew of Perugia joined the latter at Zaitun soon after 1317, and became his successor in 1322. Soon after writing a letter in January, 1326, he died; and Bishop Peter of Florence took his place.

260. Blessed Odoric of Pordenone and his companion, Friar James, visited Zaitun about 1324 and saw the two churches and friaries of their confreres. Here they left the relics of the martyrs which they had taken along from Thana in India. The skull of Blessed Thomas of Tolentino, however, Blessed Odoric took along with him to Khan-baliq, and thence to Italy. When Father John of Marignolli passed through Zaitun about 1346, he found there, not merely two, but three very beautiful churches, and two friaries.

261. The last bishop of Zaitun of whom we find any mention was Bishop James of Florence, who with his com-

panion Friar William of Campania, was killed in 1362 by Moslems in Turkestan, while they were on the way to Zaitun. Two other friars were killed by Nestorians, apparently in Turkestan, about the same time; and they, too, seem to have been on their way to China. No place or date or names are given. Similarly three Franciscans, whose names are not known, were murdered aboard a ship in the Indian Ocean in the earlier part of the 14th century; and these, too, were no doubt on their way to China.

Sinkiang

(Chinese Turkestan)

262. In the westernmost part of China, at Almaligh (or Almalek), near the present city of Kuldja (or Ili) in the province of Sinkiang, a flourishing mission was established in 1335, by Archbishop Nicholas, the successor of Montecorvino. When Archbishop Nicholas arrived at Almaligh, which was the capital of the khanate of Turkestan, he and his companions were received in a very friendly manner by the khan, whose name was Chansi. The prospects were so promising here that the archbishop, when he continued his journey toward Khan-baliq, left at Almaligh Bishop Richard of Burgundy with some companions and thus established the second suffragan see of Khan-baliq.

263. Two Alan noblemen of the khan's court, Carasmon and Johanan by name, distinguished themselves as benefactors of this mission. They donated to the bishop a plot of ground, on which two lay-brothers, Brothers Lawrence and Peter, built a beautiful cathedral. One of the missionaries, Father Francis of Alessandria, enjoyed the special favor of the khan, and was permitted to baptize the latter's seven-year-old son and instruct him in the Faith. To the little neophyte prince, Father Francis gave the name of John. The Christians enjoyed peace and prosperity and daily new converts swelled their ranks.

264. Before long, however, the good khan was poisoned by a deadly draught while on a hunt; and his four children were ruthlessly murdered. Another member of the ruling family, Ali or Alisolda by name, took hold of the reins of government; and because he was a fanatical Mohammedan,

he issued an edict commanding all Christians under penalty of death to become Moslems. Some of them fled, some yielded under the stress of torments, and some perseveringly endured imprisonment and hunger for their holy Faith.

265. All of the missionaries were cruelly tortured and then beheaded at Almaligh on or near the feast of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 1339. These martyrs were: Friar Richard of Burgundy, Bishop of Almaligh; Friar Francis of Alessandria, Italy; Friar Raymond of Ruffi, also of Alessandria; Friar Paschal of Victoria, Spain, who had come to Almaligh in 1336; Brother Peter Martel of Narbonne, Provence, France; and Brother Lawrence of Alessandria or Ancona. Besides these six members of the First Order of St. Francis there was a Tertiary, John of India, "who was of dark complexion, and after being converted to the true Faith by the friars had served as interpreter for the Archbishop of Khan-baliq," namely Archbishop Nicholas. To this list must be added also the name of a Genoese merchant, William Gilotti of Modena, who was encouraged by the heroic example of the other martyrs to lay down his life for Christ. Since Almaligh, the capital of the khanate of Turkestan, lay in Chinese Turkestan, better known as Sinkiang province, these martyrs were the protomartyrs of China.

266. The Moslem khan Alisolda, however, did not rule long. Another Mongol khan, who was as tolerant of the Christian religion as Chansi had been, soon supplanted him. The very next year, when Father John Marignolli and his party arrived at Almaligh, the new khan permitted him to preach publicly and to rebuild the cathedral. Father John also baptized a number of persons at Almaligh, and no doubt he left some of the missionaries who had come with him at this city. The subsequent history of this suffragan see in westernmost China is unknown. The dioceses and missions of Cathay, Manzi, and Sinkiang constituted the Franciscan Vicarate of Cathay.

5.

Conclusion

267. By way of conclusion, it will be well to summarize the reasons for the decline of the medieval missions in Asia and in European Russia. Those in the rest of Europe continued until the people were converted or the so-called Protestant Reformation interfered; and those among the Mohammedans in Africa were likewise kept up in as far as Moslem fanaticism permitted.

268. From the very beginning many of the friars who set out for China failed to reach their destination because they perished on the way. The dangers and obstacles which they encountered included the hardships of primitive ways of travel on land, the insecurity of the ships on which they crossed the seas, the attacks of pirates and robbers and, above all, the relentless opposition of the Mohammedans who were dispersed throughout Asia. After the downfall of the Mongol dynasty in China in 1368, the Moslem menace was far greater, and the Mongol khans were no longer able to offer protection and assistance to the traveling missionary. Not only were the Mongols ousted from China, but they also lost control of their khanates in the rest of Asia, while the Saracens gained the upperhand. The result was constant war and the gradual breaking up of these khanates.

269. Furthermore, the conquests of the Turks (fanatical adherents of Islam and the successors in the modern era of the medieval Saracens), culminating in the establishment of the Ottoman Empire in western Asia and Eastern Europe, effectively closed the routes to the East as far as the missionaries were concerned. Under Tamerlane, in the latter part of the 14th century, the Mongols succeeded once more in getting the upperhand in western Asia; but that was only a

temporary check on the steady advance of the Turks, which reached its climax in the fall of Constantinople and the end of the Byzantine Empire, 1453. And Tamerlane resembled Genghis Khan rather than the other Mongol khans; his conquests directly caused the ruin of most of the missions in the western part of Asia and southern Russia. It is true, the Black Death had been a severe blow to the missions already in the 14th century; but it was not the real cause for their cessation since new missionaries were sent out as soon as possible and repeatedly after the disastrous plague ended.

270. Professor Lybyer ("The Ottoman Turks and the Routes of Oriental Trade" in *The English Historical Review,* XXX, 577-588) has pointed out that trade was diverted from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope route because of cheap freight rates, and not because the Turks cut the old lines of communication to the Far East. But he speaks of the trade routes and commercial travelers, not Catholic missionaries. The merchant was able to get through, but the missionary had little chance of penetrating the wall of fanatical Moslem Turks which separated Asia from Europe.

271. Even if the missionary had reached the Far East, he would have found it a very difficult task to enter China after the Ming dynasty had been ruling in that country for some time, for the Ming emperors, eventually if not in the beginning, adopted a policy of complete isolation from Europe. In the 16th century (after the Cape of Good Hope route had been discovered by the Portuguese, and the Pacific route from Mexico to the Philippines had been opened by the Spaniards), members of various religious orders made numerous but fruitless attempts to reenter China. It was not till the beginning of the 17th century that the Jesuit Father Ricci was able to establish himself at the Chinese court.

272. Lastly, we would like to correct two common errors concerning the missions of the Later Middle Ages. What we have related shows plainly enough that the missionaries of this period were not just wandering missionaries, as some writers would have it. The contrary is indicated and demonstrated by the fact that so many dioceses were erected in the countries where they propagated the Catholic Faith. In

the Mongol Empire alone there were no less than four archdioceses and twenty-one dioceses during the 4th century.

273. Another error is contained in such phrases as "the whole futile undertaking" which certain writers make use of when speaking of missions which once flourished and then were destroyed. Such a verdict is far from being a just and fair interpretation of events. While they lasted, those medieval missions which came to an end were undoubtedly of immeasurable benefit to the people who dwelt in such mission fields at the time and were brought into the true fold. Even in missions which endure, each generation has new problems and tasks. New missionaries must work among new people. While they seek to establish the Church permanently, the immediate task of missionaries is to care for the flock entrusted to them and to increase its number. Missionaries never give up. When their edifice is torn down, they begin all over again to build it anew. The story of the missions of the Later Middle Ages, hitherto practically unknown, is a glorious chapter in the history of the Catholic Church.

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Study Outline

GERALD C. TREACY, S.J.

If by chance this Study is considered too long to be discussed at one meeting, it is suggested that a part of the Study be selected for study and discussion.

PART 1. PARAGRAPHS 1-126

The Later Middle Ages have long formed a regrettable gap in the history of the missions. Only during the past half century European scholars have brought to light the main facts of these three centuries of the Church's missionary work.

Europe was not wholly Catholic at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Many parts of Europe were real mission fields. Besides heretics in the south and schismatics in the east, there were many pagans and infidels in northern and eastern Europe. During the Later Middle Ages missionaries were sent to all these groups.

It was in the beginning of the thirteenth century that Europe began sending missionaries into the foreign field. St. Francis of Assisi was the inaugurator of the first European foreign mission. St. Dominic too, wished to carry the Gospel to pagans and infidels. Shortly after his death, his sons together with the sons of St. Francis were found in the mission fields of Africa and Asia.

Questions

What centuries embrace the Later Middle Ages?

When were the facts of this missionary period brought to light?

Was Europe wholly Catholic at the beginning of the thirteenth century?

What parts of Europe were pagan or infidel at this time?

When did Europe begin to send missionaries into the foreign field?

Who inaugurated the first foreign mission?

What missionary plans did St. Dominic have?

Describe the Society of Travelers.

What was the Franciscan vicarate?

What was the first mission aid society?

Part 2. Paragraphs 127-160

During the Later Middle Ages missionary work was carried on in the Saracen countries of North Africa. In the west these were Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Libya and Egypt. In the east Ethiopia became a mission field. The Canary Islands off the west coast were Christianized. And missions were begun in the other groups of islands as well as on the mainland of the west coast.

St. Francis was the first to send missionaries to Morocco in 1219. In 1225 Pope Honorius II sent a group of Franciscans and Dominicans to Morocco. Blessed Raymond Lull tried to preach Christianity in 1291. Throughout the Middle Ages the Franciscans were active in Egypt.

The Azores and Madeira Islands were uninhabited when occupied by the Portuguese in the early fifteenth century. Franciscans were the first priests in both groups of islands. Dominicans also came to the Madeira Islands. Franciscans were the first to reach the Cape Verde Islands. The first missionaries reached the Congo in 1490. It is not certain whether they were Franciscans, Dominicans or Canons Secular.

Questions

Who sent the first missionaries to Morocco in 1219?

Where was Blessed Raymond Lull's mission field?

Why has the mission field of Northern Egypt a special appeal to Franciscans?

What Apostle is said to have preached to the Ethiopians?

Describe the missionary apostolate in the Canary Islands.

Explain Bethencourt's association with the Canary Islands.

Who were the inhabitants of the Azores and Madeira Islands?

Who were the first priests in both groups?

Who were the first missionaries to enter the Congo in 1490?

Name the heresy of the Ethiopians.

Both the Franciscans and the Dominicans founded missions in the Holy Land in the first part of the thirteenth century. The Franciscans arrived in 1219, the Dominicans in 1228. The Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land was established in 1337. The Friars guarded the Holy Places and took care of the pilgrims. In Cyprus, Syria, and Persia mission work was carried on by Franciscans. Dominicans were also in Cyprus and Syria.

Friar John of Montecorvino not only labored in Persia and Armenia but he was the first resident missionary in China. This was in 1291. The Black Death all but ruined the missions in Persia. The invasions of Tamerlane, who died in 1405, completed their ruin. Missions in Armenia flourished until the Tamerlane invasions destroyed them.

The first medieval missionary in India was the Franciscan Father John of Montecorvino. The Dominican Friar Jordan Catalani came to India in 1320 or 1321. He became the first Bishop of Quilon, in Travencore, in 1329. Father John of Montecorvino spent thirty-five years in Cathay, twenty of them as an archbishop. He died in 1328 at the age of eighty-two.

The missionaries of the Later Middle Ages not only preached the Gospel but they established the Church. In the Mongol Empire alone during the fourteenth century there were four archdioceses and twenty-one dioceses.

Questions

Who are the guardians of the Holy Places and what are their duties?

Describe the career of Father John of Montecorvino.

How did the invasions of Tamerlane affect the missions in Asia?

Who was Genghis Khan and how extensive were his conquests?

Who were the first Europeans to reach China?

What did they do for Christianity in China?

What was China's attitude toward Europe during the Ming dynasty?

If many of the medieval missions perished was any good accomplished?

What is the immediate task of the missionary?

How well known has been the history of the medieval missions?

A Note on the Author

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(Additional information, if desired, may be found in *American Catholic Who's Who* and *Book of Catholic Authors,* vol. II.)

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The study outline and questions for "Catholic Missions in the Later Middle Ages," were formulated by Gerald C. Treacy, S.J., who has prepared study club editions of various encyclicals.

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